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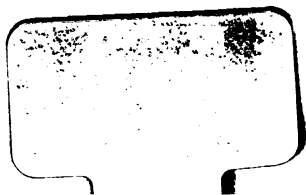
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LIVES
OF
BUNYAN, HENRY, AND HALL.

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JOHN BUNYAN IN PRISON

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Christian Biography.

LIVES
OF
BUNYAN, HENRY, AND HALL.

BY
THE REV. JAMES HAMILTON, D.D.

SCOTCH CHURCH, ARGENT STREET, LONDON.

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PREFACE.

THE following Biographies of three of the most distinguished English Divines of the seventeenth century were originally published along with select portions of their writings. The interest, however, which attaches to the history of men so distinguished in the annals of the Christian Church, and whose writings have exercised so important an influence on all succeeding generations, encourages the assurance that these biographies will be welcomed by many in the separate form in which they are now published.

MARCH 1853.

LIFE OF BUNYAN.

AFTER the pleasant sketches of pens so graceful as Southey's and Montgomery's; after the elaborate biography of Mr. Philip, whose researches have left few disiderata for any subsequent devotee; indeed, after Bunyan's own graphic and characteristic narrative, the task on which we are now entering is one which, as we would have courted it the less, so we feel that we have peculiar facilities for performing it. Our main object is to give a simple and coherent account of a most unusual man—and then we should like to turn to some instructive purpose the peculiarities of his singular history, and no less singular works.

JOHN BUNYAN was born at Elstow, near Bedford, in 1628. His father was a brazier or tinker, and brought up his son as a craftsman of like occupation. There is no evidence for the gipsy origin of the house of Bunyan; and though extremely poor, John's father gave his son such an education as

poor men could then obtain for their children. He was sent to school and taught to read and write.

There has been some needless controversy regarding Bunyan's early days. Some have too readily taken for granted that he was in all respects a reprobate; and others—the chief of whom is Dr. Southey—have laboured to show that there was little in the lad which any would censure, save the righteous overmuch. The truth is, that considering his rank of life, his conduct was not flagitious; for he never was a drunkard, a libertine, or a lover of sanguinary sports; and the profanity and Sabbath-breaking and heart-atheism which afterwards preyed on his awakened conscience, are unhappily too frequent to make their perpetrator conspicuous. The thing which gave Bunyan any notoriety in the days of his ungodliness, and which made him afterwards appear to himself such a monster of iniquity, was the energy which he put into all his doings. He had a zeal for idle play and an enthusiasm in mischief, which were the perverse manifestations of a forceful character, and which may have well entitled him to Southey's epithet—"a blackguard." The reader need not go far to see young Bunyan. Perhaps there is near your dwelling an Elstow—a quiet hamlet of some fifty houses sprinkled about in the picturesque confusion, and with the easy amplitude of space, which gives an old English village its look of leisure and longevity. And it is now verging to the close of the summer's day.

The daws are taking short excursions from the steeple, and tamer fowls have gone home from the darkening and dewy green. But old Bunyan's donkey is still browsing there, and yonder is old Bunyan's self—the brawny trumper dispread on the settle, retailing to the more clownish residents tap-room wit and roadside news. However, it is young Bunyan you wish to see. Yonder he is, the noisiest of the party, playing pitch-and-toss—that one with the shaggy eyebrows, whose entire soul is ascending in the twirling penny—grim enough to be the blacksmith's apprentice, but his singed garments hanging round him with a lank and idle freedom which scorns indentures; his energetic movements and authoritative vociferations at once bespeaking the ragamuffin ringleader. The penny has come down with the wrong side uppermost, and the loud execration at once bewrays young Badman. You have only to remember that it is Sabbath evening, and you witness a scene often enacted on Elstow green two hundred years ago.

The strong depraving element in Bunyan's character was *ungodliness*. He walked according to the course of this world, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and conscious of his own rebellion, he said unto God, "Depart from me, for I desire not the knowledge of thy ways." The only restraining influence of which he then felt the power, was terror. His days were often gloomy through forebodings of the wrath to come;

and his nights were scared with visions, which the boisterous diversions and adventures of his waking-day could not always dispel. He would dream that the last day had come, and that the quaking earth was opening its mouth to let him down to hell; or he would find himself in the grasp of fiends, who were dragging him powerless away. And musing over these terrors of the night, yet feeling that he could not abandon his sins, in his despair of heaven his anxious fancy would suggest to him all sorts of strange desires. He would wish that there had been no hell at all; or that, if he must needs go thither, he might be a devil, "supposing they were only tormentors, and I would rather be a tormentor than tormented myself."

These were the fears of his childhood. As he grew older, he grew harder. He experienced some remarkable providences, but they neither startled nor melted him. He once fell into the sea, and another time out of a boat into Bedford river, and either time had a narrow escape from drowning. One day in the field with a companion, an adder glided across their path. Bunyan's ready switch stunned it in a moment; but with characteristic daring, he forced open the creature's mouth, and plucked out the sting—a foolhardiness which, as he himself observes, might, but for God's mercy, have brought him to his end. In the civil war he was "drawn" as a soldier to go to the siege of Leicester; but when ready to set out, a comrade

sought leave to take his place. Bunyan consented. His companion went to Leicester, and, standing sentry, was shot through the head, and died. These interpositions made no impression on him at the time.

He married very early: "And my mercy was to light upon a wife, whose father was counted godly. This woman and I, though we came together as poor as poor might be—not having so much household stuff as a dish or spoon betwixt us, yet this she had for her portion, 'The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven,' and 'The Practice of Piety,' which her father had left her when he died. In these two books I would sometimes read with her, wherein I also found some things that were somewhat pleasing to me. She also would be often telling of me what a godly man her father was, and what a strict and holy life he lived in his days, both in word and deeds. Wherefore these books, with the relation, though they did not reach my heart to awaken it about my soul and sinful state, yet they did beget within me some desires to reform my vicious life, and fall in very eagerly with the religion of the times—to wit, to go to church twice a-day, and that, too, with the foremost; and there should very devoutly both say and sing as others did, yet retaining my wicked life. But, withal, I was so overrun with the spirit of superstition, that I adored, and that with great devotion, even all things—the high-place, priest, clerk, vestment, ser-

vice, and what else belonging to the church; counting all things holy that were therein contained, and especially the priest and clerk, most happy, and, without doubt, greatly blessed, because they were the servants, as I then thought, of God, and were principal in the temple to do his work therein."

So strong was this superstitious feeling—one shared by the ignorant peasantry in many portions of England, even at the present day—that "had he but seen a priest, though never so sordid and debauched in his life, his spirit would fall under him; and he could have lain down at their feet and been trampled upon by them—their name, their garb, and work, did so intoxicate and bewitch him. It little matters what form superstition takes—image-worship, priest-worship, or temple-worship; nothing is transforming except Christ in the heart, a Saviour realized, accepted, and enthroned. Whilst adoring the altar, and worshipping the surplice, and deifying the individual who wore it, Bunyan continued to curse and blaspheme, and spend his Sabbaths in the same riot as before.

One day, however, he heard a sermon on the sin of Sabbath-breaking. It fell heavy on his conscience; for it seemed all intended for him. It haunted him throughout the day, and when he went to his usual diversion in the afternoon, its cadence was still knelling in his troubled ear. He was busy at a game called "Cat," and had already struck the ball one blow, and was about to deal another, when

“a voice darted from heaven into his soul, ‘Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell!’” His arm was arrested, and looking up to heaven, it seemed as if the Lord Jesus was looking down upon him in remonstrance and severe displeasure; and, at the same instant, the conviction flashed across him, that he had sinned so long that repentance was now too late. “My state is surely miserable—miserable if I leave my sins, and but miserable if I follow them. I can but be damned; and if I must be so, I had as good be damned for many sins as few.” In the desperation of this awful conclusion he resumed the game; and so persuaded was he that heaven was forever forfeited, that for some time after he made it his deliberate policy to enjoy the pleasures of sin as rapidly and intensely as possible.

To understand the foregoing incident, and some which may follow, the reader must remember that Bunyan was made up of vivid fancy and vehement emotion. He seldom believed; he always felt and saw. And he could do nothing by halves. He threw a whole heart into his love and his hatred; and when he rejoiced or trembled, the entire man and every movement was converted into ecstasy or horror. Many have experienced the dim counterpart of such processes as we are now describing; but will scarcely recognise their own equivalent history in the bright realizations and agonizing vicissitudes of a mind so fervent and ideal.

For a month or more he went on in resolute sinning, only grudging that he could not get such scope as the madness of despair solicited. When one day standing at a neighbour's window, cursing and swearing, and "playing the madman, after his wonted manner," the woman of the house protested that he made her tremble, and that truly he was the ungodliest fellow for swearing that she ever heard in all her life, and quite enough to ruin the youth of the whole town. The woman was herself a notoriously worthless character; and so severe a reproof from so strange a quarter, had a singular effect on Bunyan's mind. He was in a moment silenced. He blushed before the God of heaven; and as he there stood with hanging head, he wished with all his heart that he were a little child again, that his father might teach him to speak without profanity; for he thought it so inveterate now, that reformation was out of the question. Nevertheless, so it was, from that instant onward he was cured of his wicked habit, and people wondered at the change.

"Quickly after this I fell into company with one poor man that made profession of religion; who, as I then thought, did talk pleasantly of the Scriptures, and of the matter of religion. Wherefore, falling into some love and liking of what he said, I betook me to my Bible, and began to take great pleasure in reading, but especially with the historical part thereof; for as for Paul's Epistles, and such like

Scriptures, I could not away with them, being as yet ignorant either of the corruption of my nature, or of the want and worth of Jesus Christ to save me. Wherefore I fell into some outward reformation, both in my words and life, and did set the commandments before me for my way to heaven ; which commandments I also did strive to keep, and, as I thought, did keep them pretty well sometimes, and then I should have comfort ; yet now and then should break one, and so afflict my conscience ; but then I should repent, and say I was sorry for it, and promise God to do better next time, and there got help again ; for then I thought I pleased God as well as any man in England. Thus I continued about a year ; all which time our neighbours did take me to be a very godly man, a new and religious man, and did marvel much to see such great and famous alteration in my life and manners ; and indeed so it was, though I knew not Christ, nor grace, nor faith, nor hope ; for, as I have well since seen, had I then died, my state had been most fearful. But, I say, my neighbours were amazed at this my great conversion, from prodigious profaneness to something like a moral life ; and so they well might ; for this my conversion was as great as for Tom of Bedlam to become a sober man. Now, therefore, they began to speak well of me, both before my face and behind my back. Now I was, as they said, become godly ; now I was become a right honest man. But oh ! when I understood

these were their words and opinions of me, it pleased me mighty well. For though, as yet, I was nothing but a poor painted hypocrite, yet I loved to be talked of as one that was truly godly. . . . And thus I continued for about a twelvemonth or more."

Though not acting from enlightened *motives*, Bunyan was now under the guidance of new *influences*. For just as the Spirit of God puts forth a restraining influence on many during the days of their carnality, which makes the change at their conversion less conspicuous than if they had been lifted from the depths of a flagitious reprobacy; so others he long subjects to a preparatory process, during which some of the old and most offensive things of their ungodliness pass away; and when the revolution, effected by the entrance of the evangelic motive, at last takes place, it is rather to personal consciousness than to outward observation that the change is perceptible. The real and final transformation is rather within the man than upon him. So was it with John Bunyan. One by one he abandoned his besetting sins, and made many concessions to conscience, while as yet he had not yielded his heart to the Saviour. It was slowly and regretfully, however, that he severed the "right hand." One of his principal amusements was one which he could not comfortably continue. It was *bell-ringing*; by which he probably means the merry peals with which they used to desecrate

their Sabbath evenings. It was only by degrees that he was able to abandon this favourite diversion. "What if one of the bells should fall?" To provide against this contingency, he took his stand under a beam fastened across the tower. "But what if the falling bell should rebound from one of the side walls, and hit me after all?" This thought sent him down stairs, and made him take his station, rope in hand, at the steeple door. "But what if the steeple itself should come down?" This thought banished him altogether, and he bade adieu to bell-ringing. And by a similar series of concessions, eventually, but with longer delay, he gave up another practice for which his conscience checked him—dancing. All these improvements in his conduct were a source of much complacency to himself, though all this while he wanted the soul-emancipating and sin-subduing knowledge of Jesus Christ. The Son had not made him free.

There is such a thing as cant. It is possible for flippant pretenders to acquire a peculiar phraseology, and use it with a painful dexterity; and it is also possible for genuine Christians to subside into a state of mind so listless or secular, that their talk on religious topics will have the inane and heartless sound of the tinkling cymbal. But as there is an experimental religion, so is it possible for those who have felt religion in its vitality to exchange their thoughts regarding it, and to relate what it—or rather, God in it—has done for them. There

are few things which indicate a healthier state of personal piety than such a frank and full-hearted Christian intercourse. It was a specimen of such communings which impressed on the mind of Bunyan the need of something beyond an outside reformation. He had gone to Bedford in prosecution of his calling, when, passing along the street, he noticed a few poor women sitting in a doorway, and talking together. He drew near to listen to their discourse. It surprised him; for though he had by this time become a great talker on sacred subjects, their themes were far beyond his reach. God's work in their souls—the views they had obtained of their natural misery and of God's love in Christ Jesus—what words and promises had particularly refreshed them and strengthened them against the temptations of Satan; it was of matters so personal and vital that they spake to one another. "And methought they spake as if you had made them speak; they spake with such pleasantness of Scripture language, and with such appearance of grace in all they said, that they were to me as if they had found a new world—as if they were 'people that dwelt alone and were not to be reckoned among their neighbours!'"

The conversation of these poor people made a deep impression on Bunyan's mind. He saw that there was something in real religion into which he had not yet penetrated. He sought the society of these humble instructors, and learned from them

much that he had not known before. He began to read the Bible with new avidity; and that portion which had formerly been most distasteful—the Epistles of Paul—now became the subject of his special study. A sect of Antinomians, who boasted that they could do whatsoever they pleased without sinning, now fell in his way. Professors of religion were rapidly embracing their opinions, and there was something in their wild fervour and apparent raptures prepossessing to the ardent mind of Bunyan. He read their books, and pondered their principles; but prefaced his examination with the simple prayer,—“O Lord, I am a fool, and not able to know the truth from error. Lord, leave me not to my own blindness. If this doctrine be of God, let me not despise it; if it be of the devil, let me not embrace it. Lord, in this matter I lay my soul only at thy foot: let me not be deceived, I humbly beseech thee.” His prayer was heard, and he was saved from this snare of the devil.

The object to which the eye of an inquiring sinner should be turned, is CHRIST—the finished work and the sufficient Saviour. But, in point of fact, the chief stress of the more evangelical instruction has usually been laid on FAITH—on that act of the mind which unites the soul to the Saviour, and makes salvation personal; and it is only by studying faith that many have come at last to an indirect and circuitous acquaintance with Christ. By some such misdirection Bunyan was

mised. In quest of faith he went a long and joyless journey, and was wearied with the greatness of his way. It was secretly urged upon his mind, that if he had faith he would be able to work miracles ; and passages of Scripture were borne in upon his mind, which bespoke the omnipotence of faith. One day, on the road from Elstow to Bedford, it was suggested to his mind to try some miracle, and that miracle should be, "to say to the puddles which were in the horse-pads, 'Be dry,' and to the dry places, 'Be you puddles.'" However, before doing this, he thought he should go over the hedge and pray for faith, and then come and speak the word. "But what if, after you have prayed and tried to do it, nothing happens?" The dread of this alternative made him postpone the anxious experiment, and left him still in doubt.

Then he had a sort of waking vision, suggested by what he had seen in his pious friends at Bedford. "I saw as if they were on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds. Methought also, betwixt me and them, I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain ; now through this wall my soul did greatly desire to pass, concluding that if I could, I would even go into the very midst of them, and there also comfort myself with the heat of their sun.

About this wall I thought myself to go again and again, still prying as I went, to see if I could find some gap or passage to enter therein. But none could I find for some time. At the last I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little doorway, in the wall, through which I attempted to pass. Now, the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many efforts to get in, but all in vain, even until I was well-nigh quite beat out, by striving to get in. At last, with great striving, methought I at first did get in my head, and after that, by a sideling striving, my shoulders and my whole body.* Then was I exceedingly glad ; went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun. Now, this mountain and wall were thus made out to me : The mountain signified the Church of the living God ; the sun that shone thereon, the comfortable shining of his merciful face on them that were therein : the wall, I thought, was the world, that did make separation between the Christians and the world ; and the gap which was in the wall, I thought, was Jesus Christ, who is the way to God the Father. But forasmuch as the passage was wonderful narrow, even so narrow that I could not, but with great difficulty, enter in thereat, it showed me that none could enter into life but those that were in down-right earnest, and unless they left that wicked

* Those who are interested in the historic parallels supplied by Christian biography will find a similar instructive dream in the *Life of General Burn*, vol. I. pp. 127-130.

world behind them; for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul and sin." The dream did him good, for, though it brought him no absolute assurance, it inspirited his efforts after it.

There is scarcely a fear which can assail an inquiring spirit which did not at some stage of his progress arrest the mind of Bunyan. At one time he was afflicted by an erroneous view of the doctrine of election. Looking at them from the outer and under side, those purposes of everlasting love which secure their safety who have already got within the precincts of salvation, appeared bristling and forbidding—a frowning *chevaux de frise*, rather than a fence of protection and preservation. And when somewhat relieved from this perplexity, he fell into another. He feared that the day of grace was gone; and so impressed on his mind was this mournful conviction, that he could do little else than upbraid his own infatuation for allowing the one propitious season to pass for ever away. But the words, "Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled;" and those others, "And yet there is room," brought him relief. Then, again, he saw that the call of Christ was needful to make a man a disciple; and he feared that he should never get that call. "But oh! how I now loved those words that spake of a Christian's calling! as when the Lord said to one, Follow me; and to another, Come after me: and oh! thought I, that he would say so to me too: how gladly would I run after

him! How lovely now was every one in my eyes, that I thought to be converted, whether man or woman! They shone, they walked like a people that carried the broad seal of heaven upon them. Oh! I saw the lot was fallen to them in pleasant places, and they had a goodly heritage. But that which made me sick, was that of Christ,—‘He went up into a mountain, and called to him whom he would, and they came unto him.’ This Scripture made me faint and fear, yet it kindled fire in my soul. That which made me fear was this, lest Christ should have no liking to me, for he called whom he would. But oh! the glory that I saw in that condition did still so engage my heart, that I could seldom read of any that Christ did call but I presently wished, ‘Would I had been in their clothes! would I had been born Peter! would I had been born John! or, would I had been by, and had heard him when he called them, how would I have cried, O Lord, call me also. But oh! I feared he would not call me.’”

There was at that time a minister in Bedford whose history was almost as remarkable as Bunyan's own. His name was Gifford. He had been a staunch royalist, and concerned in the rising in Kent. He was arrested, and, with eleven of his comrades, was doomed to die. The night before the day fixed for his execution, his sister came to visit him. She found the guard asleep, and, with her assistance, the prisoner effected his escape. For three days he was hid in a field, in the bottom of a

deep ditch ; but at last he contrived to get away to a place of safety in the neighbourhood of Bedford. Being there a perfect stranger, he ventured on the practice of physic ; but he was still abandoned to reckless habits and outrageous vice. One evening he lost a large sum of money at the gaming-table, and, in the fierceness of his chagrin, his mind was filled with the most desperate thoughts of the providence of God. In his vexation, he snatched up a book. It was a volume of Bolton, a solemn and forceful writer then well known. A sentence in this book so fixed on his conscience, that for many weeks he could get no rest in his spirit. When at last he found forgiveness through the blood of Christ, his joy was extreme, and, except for two days before his death, he never lost the comfortable persuasion of God's love. 'For some time the few pious individuals in that neighbourhood would not believe that such a reprobate was really converted ; but, nothing daunted by their distrust, like his prototype of Tarsus, he began to preach the Word with boldness, and, endowed with a vigorous mind and a fervent spirit, remarkable success attended his ministry. A little church was formed, and he was invited to become its pastor ; and there he continued till he died.* It was to this Mr. Gifford that Bunyan was at this time introduced ; and though the conversations of this "Evangelist" brought him

* Iviamey's *Life of Bunyan*, pp. 51-52.

no immediate comfort, it was well for him to enjoy the friendship and sympathy of one whose own views were so clear and happy.

It is instructive to find, that, amid all the depression of these anxious days, it was not any one sin, nor any particular class of sins, which made him so fearful and unhappy. He felt that he was a sinner, and, as a sinner, he wanted a perfect righteousness to present him faultless before God. This righteousness, he also knew, was nowhere to be found except in the person of Jesus Christ. "My original and inward pollution,—that was my plague and affliction. *That* I saw at a dreadful rate, always putting forth itself within me,—that I had the guilt of to amazement; by reason of that I was more loathsome in mine own eyes than a toad; and I thought I was so in God's eyes too. Sin and corruption, I said, would as naturally bubble out of my heart as water would out of a fountain. I thought now that every one had a better heart than I had. I could have changed hearts with anybody. I thought none but the devil himself could equalize me for inward wickedness and pollution of mind. I fell, therefore, at the sight of my own vileness, deeply into despair; for I concluded that this condition that I was in could not stand with a state of grace. Sure, thought I, I am forsaken of God; sure I am given up to the devil and a reprobate mind. And thus I continued a long while, even for some years together."

During these painful apprehensions regarding his own state, it is no marvel that he looked on secular things with an apathetic eye. "While thus afflicted with the fears of my own damnation, there were two things would make me wonder: the one was, when I saw old people hunting after the things of this life, as if they should live here always; the other was, when I found professors much distressed and cast down when they met with outward losses, as of husband, wife, child, &c, Lord, thought I, what ado is here about such little things as these! What seeking after carnal things by some, and what grief in others for the loss of them! If they so much labour after, and shed so many tears for the things of this present life, how am I to be bemoaned, pitied, and prayed for! My soul is dying, my soul is damning. Were my soul but in a good condition, and were I but sure of it, ah! how rich would I esteem myself, though blessed but with bread and water! I should count those but small afflictions, and bear them as little burdens. A wounded spirit who can bear!"

This long interval of gloom was at last relieved by a brief sun-burst of joy. He heard a sermon on the text, "Behold, thou art fair, my love;" in which the preacher said, that a ransomed soul is precious to the Saviour, even when it appears very worthless to itself,—that Christ loves it when tempted, assaulted, afflicted, and mourning under the hiding of God's countenance. Bunyan went home musing on

the words, till the truth of what the preacher said began to force itself upon his mind ; and, half incredulous at first, a hesitating hope dawned in upon his spirit. "Then I began to give place to the word, which, with power, did over and over make this joyful sound within my soul—'Thou art my love, thou art my love ; and nothing shall separate thee from my love.' And with that my heart was filled full of comfort and hope ; and now I could believe that my sins should be forgiven me : yea, I was now so taken with the love and mercy of God, that I remember I could not tell how to contain till I got home. I thought I could have spoken of his love, and have told of his mercy to me, even to the very crows that sat upon the ploughed lands before me, had they been capable to have understood me. Wherefore, I said in my soul, with much gladness, Well, I would I had pen and ink here. I would write this down before I go any farther ; for surely I will not forget this forty years hence."

However, as he himself remarks, in less than forty days he had forgotten it all. A flood of new and fierce temptations broke over him, and, had it not been for a strong sustaining arm which unseen upheld him, his soul must have sunk in the deep and angry waters. At one time he was almost overwhelmed in a hurricane of blasphemous suggestions, and, at another time, his faith had well-nigh made shipwreck on the shoals of infidelity or

deliberate atheism. But the very reluctance and dismay of his spirit showed that anew nature was in him. "I often, when these temptations have been with force upon me, did compare myself to the case of such a child whom some gipsy hath by force took up in her arms, and is carrying from friend and country; kick sometimes I did, and also shriek and cry; but yet I was bound in the wings of the temptation, and the wind would carry me away." It was all that he could do to refrain from articulating such words as he imagined would amount to the sin against the Holy Ghost; and for a year together he was haunted with such diabolical suggestions that he was weary of his life, and fain would have changed condition with a horse or a dog. During this dreary term, it is no wonder that his heart felt hard. "Though he should have given a thousand pounds for a tear, he could not shed one, and often he had not even the desire to shed one." Every ordinance was an affliction. He could not listen to a sermon, or take up a religious book, but a crowd of wild and horrid fancies rushed in betwixt the subject and his bewildered mind. He could not assume the attitude of prayer but he felt impelled to break off, almost as if some one had been pulling him away; or, to mar his devotion, some ridiculous object was sure to be presented to his fancy. It is not surprising that he should have concluded that he was possessed by the devil; and it is scarcely possible to peruse his own and

similar recitals without the forcible conviction that they are more than the mere workings of the mind either in its sane or its disordered state.

Only relieved by some glimpses of comfort, "which, like Peter's sheet, were of a sudden caught up from him into heaven again," this horrible darkness lasted no less than a year. The light which first stole in upon it, and in which it finally melted away, was a clear discovery of the person of Christ, more especially a distinct perception of the dispositions which he manifested while here on earth. And one thing greatly helped him. He alighted on a congenial mind, and an experience almost identical with his own. From the emancipation which this new acquaintance gave to his spirit, as well as the tone which he imparted to Bunyan's theology, we had best relate the incident in his own words: "Before I had got thus far out of my temptations, I did greatly long to see some ancient godly man's experience, who had writ some hundreds of years before I was born; for those who had writ in our days, I thought (but I desire them now to pardon me) that they had writ only that which others felt; or else had, through the strength of their wits and parts, studied to answer such objections as they perceived others perplexed with, without going down themselves into the deep. Well, after many such longings in my mind, the God in whose hands are all our days and ways, did cast into my hands one day a book of Martin

Luther's. It was his Comment on the Galatians ; it also was so old that it was ready to fall piece from piece if I did but turn it over. Now I was pleased much that such an old book had fallen into my hands ; the which, when I had but a little way perused, I found my condition in his experience so largely and profoundly handled, as if his book had been written out of my heart. This made me marvel ; for thus, thought I, this man could not know anything of the state of Christians now, but must needs write and speak the experience of former days. Besides, he doth most gravely also, in that book, debate of the sin of these temptations, namely, blasphemy, desperation, and the like ; showing that the law of Moses, as well as the devil, death, and hell, hath a very great hand therein : the which, at first, was very strange to me ; but considering and watching, I found it so indeed. But of particulars here I intend nothing ; only this, methinks, I must let fall before all men, I do prefer this book of Martin Luther upon the Galatians—excepting the Holy Bible—before all the books that ever I have seen, as most fit for a wounded conscience."

There was one thing of which Bunyan was very conscious—that his extrication from the fearful pit was the work of an almighty hand. The transition was very blissful ; but just because his present views were so bright and assuring, he knew that flesh and blood had not revealed them. "Now I had an evidence, as I thought, of my salvation from heaven,

with many golden seals thereon, all hanging in my sight. Now could I remember this manifestation and the other discovery of grace with comfort, and should often long and desire that the last day were come, that I might be for ever inflamed with the sight and joy and communion with Him, whose head was crowned with thorns, whose face was spit on, and body broken, and soul made an offering for my sins; for, whereas before I lay continually trembling at the mouth of hell, now methought I was got so far therefrom, that I could not, when I looked back, scarce discern it. And oh! thought I, that I were fourscore years old now, that I might die quickly, that my soul might be gone to rest. And now I found, as I thought, that I loved Christ dearly. Oh! methought that my soul cleaved unto him, my affections cleaved unto him. I felt love to him as hot as fire; and now, as Job said, I thought I should die in my nest."

: Another period of fearful agony, however, awaited him, and, like the last, it continued for a year. In pursuing his own recital of these terrible conflicts, the first relief to our tortured sympathy is in the recollection that it is all over now, and that the sufferer, escaped from his great tribulation, is long ago before the throne. But in the calmer, because remoter, contemplation of this fiery trial, it is easy to see "the end of the Lord." When He permitted Satan to tempt his servant Job, it was not for Job's sake merely, nor for the sake of the blessed contrast

which surprised his latter days, that he allowed such thick-coming woes to gather round the patriarch; but it was to provide in his parallel experience a storehouse of encouragement and hope for the future children of sorrow. And when the Lord permitted the adversary so violently to assail our worthy, and when he caused so many of his own waves and billows to pass over him, it was not merely for the sake of Bunyan—it was for the sake of Bunyan's readers down to the end of time. By selecting this strong spirit as the subject of these trials, the Lord provided, in his intense feelings and vivid realizations, a normal type—a glaring instance of those experiences which, in their fainter modifications, are common to most Christians; and, through his graphic pen, secured a guide-book for Zion's pilgrims in ages yet to come. In the temptations we are now called to record, there is something so peculiar, that we do not know if Christian biography supplies any exact counterpart; but the time and manner of its occurrence have many and painful parallels. It was after he had entered into "rest"—when he had received joyful assurance of his admission into God's family, and was desiring to depart and be with Christ—it was then that this assault was made on his constancy, and it was a fiercer assault than any. If we do not greatly err, it is not uncommon for believers to be visited after conversion with temptations from which they were exempt in the days of their ignorance; as well as

temptations which, but for their conversion, could not have existed.

The temptation to which we have alluded took this strange and dreadful form—to sell and part with his Saviour, to exchange him for the things of this life—for anything. This horrid thought he could not shake out of his mind, day nor night, for many months together. It intermixed itself with every occupation, however sacred, or however trivial. “He could not eat his food, stoop for a pin, chop a stick, nor cast his eye to look on this or that, but still the temptation would come, ‘Sell Christ for this, sell Christ for that—sell him, sell him.’ Sometimes it would run in my thoughts not so little as a hundred times together, Sell him, sell him, sell him; against which, I may say, for whole hours together, I have been forced to stand as continually leaning and forcing my spirit against it; lest haply, before I was aware, some wicked thought might arise in my heart that might consent thereto; and sometimes the tempter would make me believe I had consented to it; but then should I be as tortured on a rack for whole days together.”—“But, to be brief, one morning as I did lie in my bed, I was, as at other times, most fiercely assaulted with this temptation to sell and part with Christ—the wicked suggestion still running in my mind, ‘Sell him, sell him, sell him, sell him, as fast as a man could speak; against which I also, as at other times, answered, No, no; not for thousands, thousands, thousands, at

least twenty times together. But at last, after much striving, even until I was almost out of breath, I felt this thought pass through my heart, Let him go, if he will ; and I thought also that I felt my heart freely consent thereto. O, the diligence of Satan ! O, the desperateness of man's heart ! Now was the battle won, and down fell I, as a bird that is shot from the top of a tree, into great guilt and fearful despair. Thus getting out of my bed, I went moping into the field, but, God knows, with as heavy a heart as mortal man, I think, could bear ; where, for the space of two hours, I was like a man bereft of life, and as now past all recovery, and bound over to eternal punishment. And withal, that scripture did seize upon my soul, ' O profane person, as Esau, who, for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright ; for ye know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected ; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.' These words were to my soul like fetters of brass, in the continual sound of which I went for several months together."

The anxious casuistry in which he sought relief, and the alternation of wistful hope and blank despair, in which for many a dismal day he was tossed to and fro, none but himself can properly describe. They are deeply affecting, and to some may prove instructive.

"Then began I, with sad and careful heart, to

consider of the nature and largeness of my sin, and to search into the Word of God, if in any place I could espy a word of promise, or any encouraging sentence by which I might take relief. Wherefore I began to consider that of Mark iii., 'All manner of sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, wherewith soever they shall blaspheme;' which place, methought, at a blush, did contain a large and glorious promise for the pardon of high offences. But considering the place more fully, I thought it was rather to be understood as relating more chiefly to those who had, while in a natural state, committed such things as there are mentioned; but not to me, who had not only received light and mercy, but that had, both after and also contrary to that, so slighted Christ as I had done. I feared, therefore, that this wicked sin of mine might be that sin unpardonable, of which he there thus speaketh, 'But he that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.'

"And now was I both a burden and a terror to myself; nor did I ever so know as now what it was to be weary of my life and yet afraid to die. O how gladly would I have been anybody but myself! anything but a man! and in any condition but my own! for there was nothing did pass more frequently over my mind, than that it was impossible for me to be forgiven my transgression, and to be saved from wrath to come."

He set himself to compare his sin with that of David and Peter, but saw that there were specialities in his guilt which made it far greater. The only case which he could compare to his own was that of Judas.

"About this time I did light on the dreadful story of that miserable mortal, Francis Spira. Every sentence in that book, every groan of that man, with all the rest of his actions in his dolours, as his tears, his prayers, his gnashing of teeth, his wringing of hands, his twisting, and languishing, and pining away, under the mighty hand of God that was upon him, was as knives and daggers to my soul; especially that sentence of his was frightful to me, 'Man knows the beginning of sin, but who bounds the issues thereof?' Then would the former sentence, as the conclusion of all, fall like a hot thunderbolt again upon my conscience, 'For you know how, that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.' Then would I be struck into a very great trembling, insomuch that at sometimes I could, for whole days together, feel my very body, as well as my mind, to shake and totter under the sense of this dreadful judgment of God.

"Now I should find my mind to flee from God as from the face of a dreadful judge; yet this was my torment, I could not escape his hand. 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.'

But blessed be his grace, that scripture in these flying fits would call as running after me, 'I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee.' This, I say, would come in upon my mind when I was fleeing from the face of God; for I did flee from his face; that is, my mind and spirit fled before him: by reason of his highness I could not endure. Then would that text cry, Return unto me; it would cry aloud, with a very great voice, Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee. Indeed this would make me make a little stop, and, as it were, look over my shoulder behind me, to see if I could discern that the God of grace did follow me with a pardon in his hand.

"Once as I was walking to and fro in a good man's shop, bemoaning of myself in my sad and doleful state, afflicting myself with self-abhorrence for this wicked and ungodly thought; lamenting also this hard hap of mine, for that I should commit so great a sin, greatly fearing I should not be pardoned; praying also in my heart, that if this sin of mine did differ from that against the Holy Ghost, the Lord would show it me; and being now ready to sink with fear, suddenly there was as if there had rushed in at the window the noise of wind upon me, but very pleasant, and as if I heard a voice speaking, 'Didst ever refuse to be justified by the blood of Christ?' And withal my whole life of profession past was in a moment opened

to me, wherein I was made to see that designedly I had not ; so my heart answered groaningly, No. Then fell with power that Word of God upon me, See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. This made a strange seizure upon my spirit ; it brought light with it, and commanded a silence in my heart of all those tumultuous thoughts that before did rise, like masterless hell-hounds, to roar and bellow, and make a hideous noise within me. It showed me also that Jesus Christ had yet a word of grace and mercy for me ; that he had not, as I feared, quite forsaken and cast off my soul. Yea, this was a kind of check for my proneness to desperation—a kind of threatening of me if I did not, notwithstanding my sins and the heinousness of them, venture my salvation upon the Son of God. But as to my determining about this strange dispensation, what it was, I know not. I have not yet, in twenty years' time, been able to make a judgment of it. I thought then what here I should be loath to speak. But verily, that sudden rushing wind was as if an angel had come upon me ; but both it and the salvation I will leave until the day of judgment. Only this I say, it commanded a great calm in my soul. It persuaded me there might be hope ; it showed me, as I thought, what the sin unpardonable was, and that my soul had yet the blessed privilege to flee to Jesus Christ for mercy. But I say concerning this dispensation, I know not what yet to say unto it. I leave it to be thought on by men of sound

judgment. I lay not the stress of my salvation thereupon, but upon the Lord Jesus in the promise; yet seeing I am here unfolding of my secret things, I thought it might not be altogether inexpedient to let this also show itself, though I cannot now relate the matter as then I did experience it. This lasted in the savour thereof about three or four days, and then I began to mistrust and despair again."

No solid peace can enter the soul except that which is brought by the Comforter. It is not the Word read and heard, but the Word revealed by the Spirit, which is saving and assuring. There is undoubtedly a divine operation on the mind wherever any special impression is produced by the truths of God; and whether that impression should be made with audible and visible manifestations accompanying it—as on the day of Pentecost—or should be so vivid as to convert a mental perception into a bodily sensation, as we are disposed to think was the case with some of the remarkable sights and heavenly voices which good men have recorded, is really of little moment. In Bunyan's case, so warm was his imagination, that every clear perception was sure to be instantaneously sounding in his ear, or standing out a bright vision before his admiring eyes. This feature of his mental conformation has been noticed already; but this may be the proper place to allude to it again.

After the short breathing time we just noticed

Bunyan began to sink in the deep waters again. It was in vain that he asked the prayers of God's people, and equally in vain that he imparted his grief to those who had passed through the same conflicts with the devil. One "ancient Christian," to whom he stated his fear that he had committed the sin for which there is no forgiveness, thought so too. "Thus was I always sinking, whatever I did think or do. So one day I walked to a neighbouring town, and sat down upon a settle in the street, and fell into a very deep panic about the most fearful state my sin had brought me to; and after long musing, I lifted up my head; but methought I saw as if the sun that shineth in the heavens did grudge to give light; and as if the very stones in the street, and tiles upon the houses, did bend themselves against me: methought that they all combined together to banish me out of the world; I was abhorred of them, and unfit to dwell among them, or be partaker of their benefits, because I had sinned against the Saviour. Then breaking out in the bitterness of my soul, I said to my soul, with a grievous sigh, 'How can God comfort such a wretch as I am?' I had no sooner said it, but this returned upon me, as an echo doth answer a voice, 'This sin is not unto death.' At which I was as if raised out of the grave, and cried out again, 'Lord, how couldst thou find out such a word as this?' for I was filled with admiration at the fitness and at the unexpectedness of the sentence.

The fitness of the word ; the rightness of the timing of it ; the power, and sweetness, and light, and glory that came with it also, were marvellous to me to find. I was now for the time out of doubt as to that about which I was so much in doubt before. I seemed now to stand upon the same ground with other sinners, and to have as good right to the Word and prayer as any of them."

In coming to this conclusion, he had made a great step in advance. His misery had hitherto been occasioned by a device of the devil, which keeps many anxious souls from comfort. He regarded his own case as a special exception to which a gospel, otherwise general, did not apply ; but this snare was now broken, and, though with halting pace, he was on the way to settled rest and joy. Frequently he would feel that his transgressions had cut him off from Christ, and left him "neither foot-hold nor hand-hold among all the props and stays in the precious Word of Life;" but presently he would find some gracious assurance—he knew not how—sustaining him. At one time he would appear to himself like a child fallen into a mill-pond, "who thought it could make some shift to sprawl and scramble in the water," yet, as it could find nothing to which to cling, must sink at last ; but by-and-by he would perceive that an unseen power was buoying him up, and encouraging him to cry from the depths. At another time he would be so discouraged and daunted, that he scarcely dared to

pray, and yet in a sort of desperation beginning, he found it true that "men ought always to pray and not to faint." On one occasion, whilst endeavouring to draw near the throne of grace, the tempter suggested "that neither the mercy of God, nor yet the blood of Christ, at all concerned him, nor could they help him by reason of his sin; therefore it was vain to pray." Yet he thought with himself, "I will pray." "But," said the tempter, "your sin is unpardonable." "Well," said he, "I will pray." "It is to no boot," said the adversary. And still he answered, "I will pray." And so he began his prayer, "Lord, Satan tells me that neither thy mercy nor Christ's blood is sufficient to save my soul. Lord, shall I honour thee most by believing thou wilt and canst? or him, by believing thou neither wilt nor canst? Lord, I would fain honour thee by believing thou canst and thou wilt." And whilst he was thus speaking, "as if some one had clapped him on the back," that scripture fastened on his mind, "O man, great is thy faith."

Relief came slowly but steadily, and was the more abiding, because he had learned by experience to distrust any comfort which did not come from the Word of God. Such passages as these, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out," greatly lightened his burden; but he derived still stronger encouragement from considering that the gospel, with its benignity, is much more expressive of the

mind and disposition of God than the law with its severity. "Mercy rejoiceth over judgment. How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth." Or, as the same truth presented itself to his mind in an aspect more arresting to a mind like his: "And Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. For he wist not what to say, for he was sore afraid. And there was a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear him." "Then I saw that Moses and Elias must both vanish, and leave Christ and his saints alone."

We have now arrived at the happy time when these doubts and distractions were exchanged for songs of deliverance. We relate it in the words of Bunyan's own narrative:—"One day as I was passing into the field, and that too with some dashes on my conscience, fearing lest yet all was not right, suddenly this sentence fell upon my soul, 'Thy righteousness is in heaven;' and methought withal I saw with the eyes of my soul, Jesus Christ at God's right hand; there, I say, was my righteousness; so that wherever I was, or whatever I was doing, God could not say of me, 'He wants my

righteousness,' for that was just before him. I also saw, moreover, that it was not my good frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor my bad frame that made my righteousness worse ; for my righteousness was Jesus Christ himself, 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed ; I was loosed from my afflictions and my irons ; my temptations also fled away ; so that from that time those dreadful scriptures of God left off to trouble me. Now went I also home rejoicing for the grace and love of God ; so when I came home I looked to see if I could find that sentence, 'Thy righteousness is in heaven,' but could not find such a saying ; wherefore my heart began to sink again, only that was brought to my remembrance, 'He is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption ;' by this word I saw the other sentence true. For, by this scripture, I saw that the man Christ Jesus, as he is distinct from us as touching his bodily presence, so he is our righteousness and sanctification before God. Here, therefore, I lived for some time very sweetly at peace with God through Christ. O ! methought, Christ, Christ ! There was nothing but Christ that was before my eyes. I was not now for looking upon this and the other benefits of Christ apart, as of his blood, burial, or resurrection, but considering him as a whole Christ, as he is when all these, and all other his virtues, relations, offices, and operations met together, and that he sat on the

right hand of God in heaven. 'Twas glorious to me to see his exaltation, and the worth and prevalency of all his benefits ; and that because now I could look from myself to him, and would reckon that all those graces of God that now were green on me, were yet but like those cracked groats and fourpence-halfpennies that rich men carry in their purses, when their gold is in their trunks at home : O ! I saw my gold was in my trunk at home ! in Christ my Lord and Saviour. Now Christ was all ; all my *righteousness*, all my *sanctification*, and all my *redemption*.

“Further, the Lord did also lead me into the mystery of union with the Son of God ; that I was joined to him, that I was ‘flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone’ (Eph. v. 30) ; and now was that word of St. Paul sweet to me. By this also was my faith in him as my righteousness the more confirmed in me ; for if he and I were one, then his righteousness was mine, his merits mine, his victory also mine. Now could I see myself in heaven and earth at once : in heaven by my Christ, by my head, by my righteousness and life ; though on earth by my body or person. Now I saw Christ Jesus was looked upon of God, and should also be looked upon by us, as that common or public person, in whom all the whole body of his elect are always to be considered and reckoned ; that we fulfilled the law by him, rose from the dead by him, got the victory over sin, death, the devil, and hell by him ;

when he died, we died ; and so of his resurrection. 'Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise,' saith he : and again, 'After two days will he revive us, and the third day we shall live in his sight:' which is now fulfilled by the sitting down of the Son of Man on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, according to that to the Ephesians, 'He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' Ah ! these blessed considerations and scriptures, with many others of like nature, were in those days made to spangle in mine eye, so that I have cause to say, 'Praise ye the Lord God in his sanctuary; praise him in the firmament of his power; praise him for his mighty acts; praise him according to his excellent greatness.'"

Extricated from the Slough of Despond, Bunyan went on his way rejoicing; and though sometimes interrupted by disquieting thoughts and strong temptations, his subsequent career was a path of growing comfort and prevailing peace. At the age of twenty-six he was admitted a member of that Baptist church of which Mr. Gifford was the faithful pastor—a rare man, who, in angry times, and in a small communion, preserved his catholicity. Holding that "union with Christ," and not agreement concerning any ordinances or things external, is the foundation of Christian fellowship, with his dying hand he addressed a letter to his beloved people, in which the following sentence occurs, the

utterance of a heart enlarged by Christian magnanimity, and bent on those objects which alone look important when the believer is waiting on the top of Pisgah : — “ Concerning separation from the church about baptism, laying on of hands, anointing with oil, psalms, or any other externals, I charge every one of you respectively, as you will give an account of it to our Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge both quick and dead at his coming, that none of you be found guilty of this great evil, which some have committed, and that through a zeal for God, yet not according to knowledge. They have erred from the law of the love of Christ, and have made a rent in the true church, which is but one.” If our Baptist brethren are justly proud that the burning and shining light of Bunyan was set upon their candlestick, they have equal reason to boast of the torch at which his bland and diffusive light was kindled. John Bunyan doubtless owed to John Gifford the peculiar type of his Christianity, its comprehensiveness, and its sect-forgetting zeal for the things of Jesus Christ.

He had not long been a member of the church when he was called to exercise its actual ministry. Gifford was gone to his everlasting rest ; and, as a substitute for his labours, it was put upon a few of the brethren to speak the word of exhortation to the rest. Of these Bunyan was one. At first he did not venture farther than to address his friends in their more private meetings, or to follow up,

with a brief application, the sermons delivered by others in their village-preaching. But these exercises having afforded the utmost satisfaction to his judicious though warm-hearted hearers, he was urged forward to more public services. These he was too humble to covet, and too earnest to refuse. Though his education was sufficiently rude, God had given him from the first a strong athletic mind and a glowing heart—that downright logic and teeming fancy, whose bold strokes and burning images heat the Saxon temper to the welding point, and make him the popular orator of our English multitude. Then his low original and rough wild history, however much they might have subjected him to scorn had he exchanged the leathern apron for a silken one, or scrambled from the hedge-side into the high places of the church, entailed no suspicion, and awakened much surprise, when the Bedford townsmen saw their blaspheming neighbour a new man, and in a way so disinterested preaching the faith which he once destroyed. The town turned out to hear, and though there was some mockery, many were deeply moved. His own account of it is:—"At first I could not believe that God should speak by me to the heart of any man, still counting myself unworthy; yet those who were thus touched would love me, and have a particular respect for me; and though I did put it from me, that they should be awakened by me, still they would confess it and affirm it before the saints of

God. . . . Wherefore, seeing them in both their words and deeds to be so constant, and also in their hearts so earnestly pressing after the knowledge of Jesus Christ, rejoicing that ever God did send me where they were, then I began to conclude it might be so, that God had owned in his work such a foolish one as I; and then came that word of God to my heart with such sweet refreshment: 'The blessing of them that were ready to perish is come upon me; yea, I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.' At this, therefore, I rejoiced; yea, the tears of those whom God had awakened by my preaching would be both solace and encouragement to me. I thought on those sayings, 'Who is he that maketh me glad, but the same that is made sorry by me?' And again, 'Though I be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am unto you: for the seal of my apostleship are ye in the Lord.'"

There was a solemnizing and subduing power in Bunyan's ministry, because it was heart-felt. So far as the truths he uttered were capable of becoming subjects of personal consciousness, he had experienced them; and so far as they were subjects of intellectual conviction, he was not only fully persuaded of them, but saw them so clear and evident, that his realizations were continually quickening into sensations. He thus began with a John Baptist ministry, to which succeeded a Pentecostal evangel; and at last it grew into the Pauline amplitude and completeness, "the whole counsel of God."

"In my preaching of the word, I took special notice of this one thing, namely, that the Lord did lead me to begin where the word begins with sinners ; that is, to condemn all flesh, and to open and allege that the curse of God by the law doth belong to and lay hold on all men as they come into the world, because of sin. Now this part of my work I fulfilled with great sense ; for the terrors of the law, and guilt for my transgressions, lay heavy on my conscience. I preached what I felt, what I smartingly did feel ; even that under which my poor soul did groan and tremble to astonishment. Indeed I have been as one sent to them from the dead ; I went myself in chains to preach to them in chains, and carried that fire in my own conscience that I persuaded them to be aware of Thus I went on for the space of two years, crying out against men's sins, and their fearful state because of them. After which the Lord came in upon my own soul with some pure peace and comfort through Christ ; for he did give me many sweet discoveries of his blessed grace through him. Wherefore now I altered in my preaching (for still I preached what I saw and felt). Now, therefore, I did much labour to hold forth Jesus Christ in all his offices, relations, and benefits, unto the world, and did strive also to discover, to condemn, and remove those false supports and props on which the world doth both lean, and by them fall and perish. On these things also I stayed as long as on the other. After this, God led

me into something of the mystery of union with Christ; wherefore, that I discovered and showed to them also. And when I had travelled through these three chief points of the Word of God, I was caught in my present practice, and cast into prison, where I have lain alone as long again to confirm the truth by way of suffering, as I was before in testifying of it, according to the Scriptures, in a way of preaching."

Bunyan's preaching was no incoherent rant. Words of truth and soberness formed the staple of each sermon; and his burning words and startling images were only the electric scintillations along the chain of his scriptural eloquence. Though the common people heard him most gladly, he had occasional hearers of a higher class. Once on a week-day he was expected to preach in a parish church near Cambridge, and a concourse of people had already collected in the churchyard. A gay student was riding past, when he noticed the crowd, and asked what had brought them together. He was told that the people had come out to hear one Bunyan, a tinker, preach. He instantly dismounted, and gave a boy twopence to hold his horse, for he declared he was determined to hear the tinker *prate*. So he went into the church, and heard the tinker; but so deep was the impression which that sermon made on the scholar, that he took every subsequent opportunity to attend Bunyan's ministry, and himself became a renowned preacher of

the gospel in Cambridgeshire. Still he felt that his errand was to the multitude, and his great anxiety was to penetrate the darkest places of the land, and preach to the most abandoned people. In these labours of unostentatious heroism, he sometimes excited the jealousy of the regular parish ministers, and even under the tolerant rule of the Protector was in some danger of imprisonment. However, it was not till the Restoration that he was in serious jeopardy; but thereafter he was among the first victims of the grand combination betwixt priests and rulers to exterminate the gospel in England.

On the 12th of November 1660, he had promised to meet a little congregation in a private house at Samsell in Bedfordshire. Before the hour of meeting he was apprized that a warrant was out to seize him; but he felt that he owed it to the gospel not to run away at such a time. Accordingly, when the people were assembled, with no weapons but their Bibles, the constable entered and arrested the preacher. He had only time to speak a few words of counsel and encouragement to his hearers: "You see we are prevented of our opportunity to speak and hear the Word of God, and are likely to suffer for the same. But be not discouraged. It is a mercy to suffer for so good a cause. We might have been apprehended as thieves and murderers, or for other wickedness; but, blessed be God, it is not so. We suffer as Christians, for well-doing; and

better be the persecuted than the persecutors." After being taken before a justice, he was committed to jail till the ensuing sessions should be held at Bedford. There an indictment was preferred—"That John Bunyan, of the town of Bedford, labourer, being a person of such and such conditions, he had since such a time devilishly and perniciously abstained from coming to church to hear divine service; and is a common upholder of several unlawful meetings and conventicles, to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom, contrary to the laws of our sovereign lord the king," &c. Of course he was convicted, and sentenced to imprisonment, with certification, that if he did not conform within a given period, he would be banished out of the kingdom.

After Bunyan ceases to be his own biographer, our materials become exceeding scanty. This is the less to be lamented when we reflect that the history of his "hidden life" is already told. The processes have now been related which formed and developed the inner man; and the few external events that befell him, and the few important things that he did, during the remaining eight-and-twenty years of his mortal pilgrimage, may be recorded in a single page.

His imprisonment was protracted from sessions to sessions, till he had measured out twelve weary years in Bedford jail. Perhaps we should not call them *weary*. They had their alleviations. His

wife and children were allowed to visit him. His blind and most beloved daughter was permitted to cheer his solitude and her own. He had his Bible, and his "Book of Martyrs." He had his imagination, and his pen. Above all, he had a good conscience. He felt it a blessed exchange to quit the "iron cage" of despair for a "den" oft visited by a celestial Comforter; and which, however cheerless, did not lack a door to heaven.

Whether it was the man's own humanity, or whether it was that God, who assuaged Joseph's captivity, gave Bunyan special favour in the eyes of the keeper of his prison, the fact is certain, that he met with singular indulgence at the least likely hands. Not only was he allowed many a little indulgence in his cell, but he was suffered to go and come with a freedom which could hardly have been exceeded had the county jail been his own hired house. For months together he was a constant attender of the church-meetings of his brethren in Bedford, and was actually chosen pastor during the period of his incarceration. On one occasion some of the bishops who had heard a rumour of the unusual liberty conceded to him, sent a messenger from London to Bedford to ascertain the truth. The officer was instructed to call at the prison during the night. It was a night when Bunyan had received permission to stay at home with his family, but so uneasy did he feel, that he told his wife he must go back to his old quarters. So

late was it that the jailer blamed him for coming at such an untimely hour ; but a little afterwards the messenger arrived. "Are all the prisoners safe?" "Yes." "Is John Bunyan safe?" "Yes." "Let me see him." Bunyan was called, and the messenger went his way ; and when he was gone the jailer told him, "Well, you may go out again just when you think proper ; for you know when to return better than I can tell you."

But the best alleviations of his captivity were those wonderful works which he there projected or composed. Some of these were controversial ; but one of them was his own life, under the title, "Grace abounding to the Chief of Sinners," and another was the "PILGRIM'S PROGRESS."

In 1672 he obtained his liberty, and his friends immediately built for him a large meeting-house, where he continued to preach with little interruption till his death. Once a year he visited London, and was there so popular, that twelve hundred people would gather together at seven in the morning of a winter's working-day to hear him. Amongst the admiring listeners, Dr. Owen was frequently found ; and once, when Charles the Second asked how a learned man like him could sit to hear a tinker prate, the great theologian is said to have answered, "May it please your Majesty, could I possess the tinker's abilities for preaching, I would most gladly relinquish all my learning." But popular as he was, he was not fond of praise. One day,

after he had concluded an impressive discourse, his friends pressed round to thank him for his "sweet sermon." "Ay," he bluntly answered, "you need not remind me of that; for the devil told me as much before I left the pulpit."

He had numbered sixty years, and written as many books, when he was released from his abundant labours. A young gentleman, his neighbour, had fallen under his father's displeasure, and was much concerned at his father's estrangement, as well as at the prospect of being disinherited. He begged Mr. Bunyan's friendly interposition to propitiate his father, and prepare the way for his return to parental favour and affection. The kind-hearted man undertook the task, and having successfully achieved it, was returning from Reading to London on horseback, when he was thoroughly drenched with excessive rains. He arrived cold and wet at the house of Mr Strudwick, a grocer on Snow Hill. Here he was seized with fits of shivering, which passed off in violent fever, and after ten days' sickness, on the 31st of August 1688 his pilgrimage ended, and he went in by the gate into the city.

We would close this rapid history of Bunyan with a few remarks on him as a Theologian and Author.

Bunyan's theological merits we rank very high. No one can turn over his pages without noticing

the abundance of his scriptural quotations; and these quotations no one can examine without perceiving how minutely he had studied, and how deeply he had pondered, the Word of God. But it is possible to be very *textual*, and yet by no means very *scriptural*. A man may have an exact acquaintance with the literal Bible, and yet entirely miss the great Bible message. He may possess a dexterous command of detached passages and insulated sentences, and yet be entirely ignorant of that peculiar scheme which forms the great gospel revelation. But this was Bunyan's peculiar excellence. He was even better acquainted with the gospel as the scheme of God, than he was familiar with the Bible-text; and the consequence is, that though he is sometimes irrelevant in his references, and fanciful in interpreting particular passages, his doctrine is almost always according to the analogy of faith. The doctrine of a free and instant justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, none even of the Puritans could state with more Luther-like boldness, nor defend with an affection more worthy of Paul. In his last and best days, Coleridge wrote: "I know of no book, the Bible excepted, as above all comparison, which I, according to my judgment and experience, could so safely recommend as teaching and enforcing the whole saving truth, according to the mind that was in Christ Jesus, as the Pilgrim's Progress. It is, in my conviction, the best *Summa Theologiae Evangelicae* ever

produced by a writer not miraculously inspired.”* Without questioning this verdict, we would include in the encomium some of his other writings, which possibly Coleridge never saw. They exhibit gospel truths in so clear a light, and state them in such a frank and happy tone, that he who runs may read, and he who reads in earnest will rejoice. The “Pilgrim” is a peerless guide to those who have already passed in at the wicket-gate; but those who are still seeking peace to their troubled souls, will find the best directory in “The Jerusalem Sinner Saved.”

Invaluable as a theologian, Bunyan stands alone as a contributor to theological literature. In recent times, no man has done so much to draw the world’s delighted attention to the subjects of supreme solicitude. No production of a mortal pen has found so many readers as one work of his; and none has awakened so frequently the sighing behest, “Let me die the death of the righteous.”

None have painted the beauty of holiness in tints more lovely, nor spoken in tones more thrilling to the heart of universal humanity. At first the favourite of the vulgar, he is now the wonder of the learned; and from the obscurity, not inglorious, of smoky cupboards and cottage chimneys, he has been escorted up to the highest places of classical renown, and duly canonized by the

* Remains, vol. iii. p. 391.

pontiffs of taste and literature. The man whom Cowper praised anonymously,

"Lest so despised a name should move a sneer,"

has at last extorted emulous plaudits from a larger host of writers than ever conspired to praise a man of genius, who was also a man of God. Johnson and Franklin, Scott, Coleridge, and Southey, Byron and Montgomery, Macintosh and Macaulay, have exerted their philosophical acumen and poetic feeling to analyze his various spell, and account for his unequalled fame; and though the round-cornered copies, with their diverting woodcuts, have not disappeared from the poor man's ingle, illustrated editions blaze from the shelves of every sumptuous library; new pictures, from its exhaustless themes, light up the walls of each annual exhibition; and amidst the graceful litter of the drawing-room table, you are sure to take up designs from the Pilgrim's Progress. So universal is the ascendancy of the tinker-teacher, so world-wide the diocese of him whom Whitefield created Bishop Bunyan, that probably half the ideas which the outside world entertains regarding experimental piety, have been, in some form or other, derived from him. One of the most popular preachers in his day, in his little treatises, as well as in his longer allegories, he preaches to countless thousands still. The cause of this unexampled popularity is a question of great practical moment.

And, first of all, Bunyan speaks to the whole of man—to his imagination, his intellect, his heart. He had in himself all these ingredients of full-formed humanity, and in his books he lets all of them out. French writers and preachers are apt to deal too exclusively in the one article, fancy; and though you are amused for the moment with the rocket-shower of brilliant and many-tinted ideas which fall sparkling around you, when the exhibition is ended you are disappointed to find that the whole was momentary, and that from all the ruby and emerald rain scarcely one gem of solid thought remains.* Scottish writers and preachers are apt to indulge the argumentative cacoëthes of their country, and, cramming into a tract or sermon as much hard-thinking as the Bramah-pressure of hydrostatic intellects can condense into the iron paragraphs, they leave no room for such delicate materials as fancy or feeling, illustration, imagery, or affectionate appeal;† whilst Irish authors and pulpit-orators are so surcharged with their own exuberant enthusiasm, that their main hope of making you think as they think, is to make you feel as they feel. The heart is their

* Pascal was an exception. D'Aubigne, so far as writing in French makes a Frenchman, is another. Their works are full of fancy, but it is the fancy which gives to truth its wings. The rocket is charged, not with coloured sparks, but burning jewels.

† Here, again, exceptions occur, and the greatest of our Scottish preachers is a contradiction to the characteristic style of his country

Aristotle ; and if they cannot win you by a smile, or melt you by a tear, they would think it labour lost to try a syllogism. Bunyan was neither French, nor Scotch, nor Irish. He embodied in his person, though greatly magnified, the average mind of England—playful, affectionate, downright. His intellectual power comes chiefly out in that homely, self-commending sense—the brief business-like reasoning, which might be termed Saxon logic, and of which Swift in one century, and Cobbett in another, are obvious instances. His premises are not always true, nor his inferences always legitimate ; but there is such evident absence of sophistry, and even of that refining and hair-splitting which usually beget the suspicion of sophistry—his statements are so sincere, and his conclusions so direct, the language is so perspicuous, and the appeal is made so honestly to each reader's understanding, that his popularity as a reasoner is inevitable. We need not say that the author of the "Pilgrim" possessed imagination ; but it is important to note the service it rendered to his preaching, and the charm which it still imparts to his miscellaneous works. The pictorial power he possessed in a rare degree. His mental eye perceived the truth most vividly. Some minds are moving in a constant mystery. They see men like trees walking. The different doctrines of the Bible all wear dim outlines to them, jostling and jumbling ; and after a perplexing morris of bewildering hints and

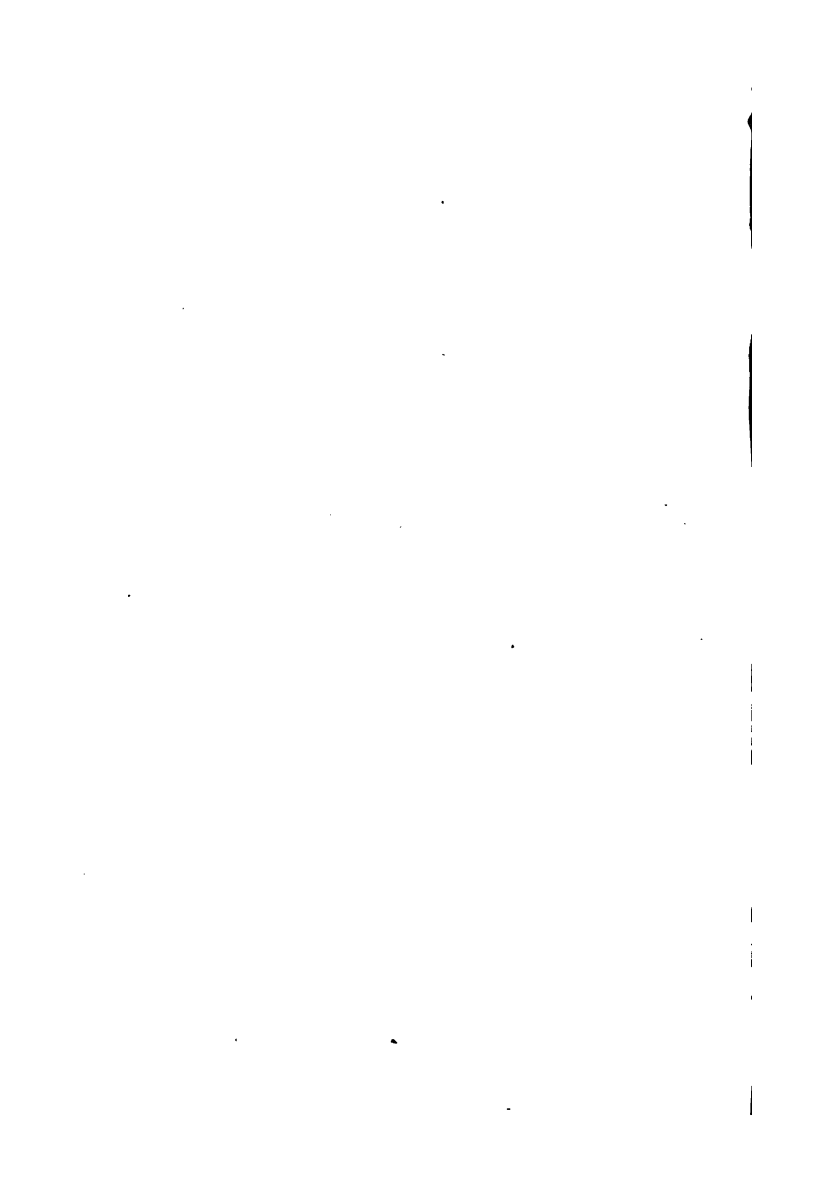
half discoveries, they vanish into the misty background of nonentity. To Bunyan's bright and broad-waking eye all things were clear. The men walked and the trees stood still. Everything was seen in sharp relief and definite outline—a *reality*. And besides the pictorial, he possessed in highest perfection the illustrative faculty. Not only did his own mind perceive the truth most vividly, but he saw the very way to give others a clear perception of it also. This is the great secret of successful teaching. Like a man who has clambered his difficult way to the top of a rocky eminence, but who, once he has reached the summit, perceives an easier path, and directs his companions along its gentler slopes, and gives them a helping-hand to lift them over the final obstacles, it was by giant struggles over the debris of crumbling hopes, and through jungles of despair, and up the cliffs of apparent impossibility, that Bunyan forced his way to the pinnacle of his eventual joy; but no sooner was he standing there, than his eagle-eye detected the easier path, and he made it the business of his benevolent ministry to guide others into it. Though not the truth, an illustration is a stepping-stone towards it—an indentation in the rock which makes it easier to climb. No man had a happier knack in hewing out these notches in the cliff, and no one knew better where to place them, than this pilgrim's pioneer. Besides, he rightly judged that the value of these suggestive similes—these illus-

trative stepping-stones—depends very much on their breadth and frequency. But Bunyan appeals not only to the intellect and imagination, but to the hearts of men. There was no bitterness in Bunyan. He was a man of kindness and compassion. How sorry he is for Mr. Badman! and how he makes you sympathize with Christian and Mr. Ready-to-halt, and Mr. Feeble-mind, and all the other interesting companions of that eventful journey! And in his sermons how piteously he pleads with sinners for their own souls! and how impressive is the undisguised vehemency of his yearning affections! In the same sentence Bunyan has a word for the man of sense, and another for the man of fancy, and a third for the man of feeling; and by thus blending the intellectual, the imaginative, and the affectionate, he speaks home to the whole man, and has made his works a lesson-book for all mankind.

Another secret of Bunyan's popularity is the felicity of his style. His English is vernacular, idiomatic, universal; varying with the subject; homely in the continuous narrative; racy and pungent in his lively and often rapid discourse; and, when occasion requires, "a model of unaffected dignity and rhythmical flow;" but always plain, strong, and natural. However, in speaking of his style, we do not so much intend his words as his entire mode of expression. A thought is like a gem; but, like a gem, it may be spoiled in the set-

ting. A careless artist may chip it and grievously curtail its dimensions; a clumsy craftsman, in his fear of destroying it, may not sufficiently polish it; or in his solicitude to show off its beauty, may overdo the accompanying ornaments. Bunyan was too skilful a workman so to mismanage the matter. His expression neither curtails nor encumbers the thought, but makes the most of it; that is, presents it to the reader as it is seen by the writer. Though there is a great appearance of amplitude about his compositions, few of his words could be wanted. Some styles are an ill-spun thread, full of inequalities, and shaggy from beginning to end with projecting fibres, which spoil its beauty, and add nothing to its strength; but in its easy continuousness and trim compactness, the thread of Bunyan's discourse flows firm and smooth from first to last. Its fulness regales the ear, and its felicity aids the understanding.

L I F E
OF THE
REV. MATTHEW HENRY,
AUTHOR OF COMMENTARY ON THE BIBLE, &c.



L I F E
OF THE
REV. MATTHEW HENRY.

THE first Life of Matthew Henry was written by a friend and cotemporary, the Rev. William Tong; and in the present day, a collateral descendant has published in three separate works, the Life of the Rev. Philip Henry, Memoirs of the Rev. Matthew Henry, and Memoirs of his sisters, Mrs. Savage and Mrs. Hutton. Never has biographer fulfilled his task with more conscientious accuracy, more affectionate enthusiasm, or a more delightful congeniality of feeling, than Sir John Bickerton Williams. To his volumes, or sources which he has indicated, we are indebted for all our facts; and readers whose curiosity is in any degree awakened by this slight notice, will find abundant information in those faithful records, where the memory of these worthies lives, and their very spirit breathes. Their able and excellent biographer must accept our thanks for the kind interest which he has shown and the help he has rendered to the present undertaking.

In the reign of Charles I. there was an orchard at Whitehall, and the keeper of it was John Henry, a Welshman. His wife, Magdalen Rochdale, was a pious woman, who took great pains with her children, and instructed them carefully in "Perkins' Six Principles," and other lesson-books which preceded the Shorter Catechism. When dying, she said, "My head is in heaven, and my heart is in heaven; it is but one step more, and I shall be there too." The name of their only son was Philip. Having become a thoughtful boy at Westminster school, and at Oxford, under such teachers as Owen and Goodwin, having grown into an enlightened Christian and an accomplished divine, he became a minister, and was settled in Worthenbury, a little parish of Flintshire.

The playmate of princes—for Charles II. and James II. were near his own age, and, when children, were often in his father's house—a gainly suavity marked the demeanour of PHILIP HENRY all his days; and the memories of his boyhood mingled with the convictions of his manhood, and without diluting his creed, softened his spirit. When a Presbyterian and a Puritan, he still remembered Whitehall; how he used to run and open the water-gate to Archbishop Laud, and how his father took him to visit the Primate in the Tower, and how the captive prelate gave him some pieces of new money. He recollected the crowd which assembled before the palace that dismal

30th of January, when a King of England lost his head. And he treasured up the keepsakes which the royal children had given him. His father died a sturdy royalist; and though he himself loved the large gospel and strict religion of the Commonwealth, with a filial tenderness he always cherished these personal recollections of the reign.

The people of Worthenbury were very few. Though a popular preacher, Philip Henry never counted eighty communicants. And his parishioners were poor; they delved and ploughed, and made the most of hungry little farms. But though they were neither numerous nor learned, their minister felt that they were sufficiently important to demand his utmost pains. He visited and catechised them till he diffused a goodly measure of Christian intelligence; he took an affectionate and assiduous interest in all their concerns, and by the amenity of his disposition, as greatly endeared himself, as by the blameless elevation of his life he commended the gospel; and, though destined for a small and homely congregation, he laboured hard at his sermons. Indeed this latter part of his work was hardly felt as a labour. He had an instinct for sermon-making. To his quaint and ingenious mind there was the same enjoyment in a curious division, or a happy plan, which an enthusiastic artist feels in sketching a novel subject or a striking group; and it was a treat to his methodical eye to see accumulating in his cabinet piles of clear

and evenly written manuscript, and systems of pungent theology.

Few have surpassed Philip Henry in that trim antithesis and exact alliteration which were so prized by our ancestors. If it were asked, "What are the Promises?" the answer was, "Articles of the Covenant; Breasts of Consolation; Christian's Charter;"—and so on through all the alphabet, down to "Wells of Salvation; 'Xceeding great and precious; Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus; Zion's peculiar." And even his common conversation shaped itself into balanced sentences and proverbial maxims: "If I cannot go to the house of God, I will go to the God of the house." "Forced absence from God's ordinances, and forced presence with wicked people, is a grievous burden to a gracious soul." "Solitariness is no sign of sanctity. Pest-houses stand alone, and yet are full of infectious diseases." "There are two things we should beware of: That we never be ashamed of the gospel, and that we may never be a shame to it." "There are three things, which, if Christians do, they will find themselves mistaken: If they look for that in themselves which is to be had in another, namely, *righteousness*; If they look for that in the law which is to be had only in the gospel, namely, *mercy*; If they look for that on earth which is to be had only in heaven, namely, *perfection*." In defiance of modern criticism, we own a certain kindliness for this old-fashioned art; it has a He-

brew look ; it reminds us of the alphabetic psalms, and the "six things, yea seven," of Solomon. And we believe that it has a deep root in nature—the love of alliteration and antithesis being, in another form, the love of rhyme and metre. We never see in an ancient garden a box-tree peacock, or a hemisphere of holly, but we feel a certain pleasure ; we cannot help admiring the obvious industry ; and we feel that they must have been a genial and gay-hearted people who taught their evergreens to ramp like lions, or flap their wings like crowing cocks. And, more especially, we feel that but for this grotesque beginning we might never have arrived at the landscape gardens of later times. Though they were the mere memorials of what amused our fathers, we could tolerate these conceits in cyprus and yew ; but when we recollect that they were the first attempts at the picturesque, and the commencement of modern elegance, we view them with a deeper interest. Doubtless this alliterative and antistrophic style was eventually overdone, and like the Dutch gardener who locked up his apprentice in the one summer-house because he had secured a thief in the other, the later Puritans sacrificed everything to verbal jingles and acrostic symmetry. But Philip Henry was a scholar, and a man of vigorous intellect, and, in the sense most signal, a man of God. Translated into the tamest language, his sayings would still be weighty ; but when we reflect that to his peasant hearers their

original terseness answered all the purpose of an artificial memory, we not only forgive, but admire it. Many a good thought has perished because it was not portable, and many a sermon is forgotten because it is not memorable ; but like seeds with wings, the sayings of Philip Henry have floated far and near, and like seeds with hooked prickles, his sermons stuck to his most careless hearers. His tenacious words took root, and it was his happiness to see not only scriptural intelligence, but fervent and consistent piety, spreading amongst his parishioners.

When he had settled at Worthenbury, Mr. Philip Henry sought in marriage the only daughter and heiress of Mr. Matthews of Broad Oak. There was some demur on the part of her father ; he allowed that Mr. Henry was a gentleman, a scholar, and an excellent preacher, but he was a stranger, and they did not even know where he came from. "True," said Miss Matthews, "but I know where he is going, and I should like to go with him : " and she went. There is little recorded of her, except that she was very kind-hearted, devout, and charitable, "and always well satisfied with whatever God and her friends did for her." Five of their six children grew up ; and when Bartholomew-day banished Philip Henry from his pulpit and his people, his wife's inheritance of Broad Oak supplied a better home than was found by the families of most ejected ministers.

Seldom has a scene of purer domestic happiness

been witnessed than the love of God and one another created there. Ensconced in his well-furnished library, transcribing into his folio common-place book choice sentences from Cicero and Seneca, Augustine and Ambrose, Calvin and Beza, Baxter and Carlyl, or writing out courses of sermons which he yet hoped to preach, the industrious divine improved his abundant leisure. And whilst his partner looked well to the ways of her household, the thriving fields and tasteful garden proclaimed their united husbandry. Standing hospitably by the way-side, their house received frequent visits from the most renowned and godly men in that vicinity, visits to which their children looked forward with veneration and joy, and which left their long impression on youthful memories. And on all the inmates of the family, the morning and evening worship told with hallowing power. Seldom has this ordinance been observed so sacredly, or rendered so delightful. Alluding to the words chalked on plague-stricken houses, Philip Henry would say, "If the worship of God be not within, write 'Lord have mercy upon us' on the door; for a plague, a curse is there." And as he deemed it so important, he laboured to make it instructive and engaging to all. In the morning he arranged it so that the bustle of the day should not infringe on it, and in the evening so early that no little girl should be nodding at the chapter, nor any drowsy servant yawning through the prayer. "Better one away than all

sleepy," he would say, if occasionally obliged to begin before some absentee returned; but so much did the fear of God and affection for the head of the household reign, that none were wilfully missing. And with this "hem" around it, the business of each successive day was effectually kept from "ravelling." It was his custom to expound a portion of Scripture, and he encouraged his children to write notes of these familiar explanations. Before they quitted the paternal roof, each of them had in this way secured in manuscript a copious commentary on the Bible, which they treasured up as a precious memorial of their happy early days, and their heavenly-minded father. In the hands of his only son these simple notes became the germ of the most popular English commentary.—It is this son's history which we ought to sketch; but as the Broad Oak family was one, and Matthew and his sisters not only loved one another tenderly, but pursued the same solid and useful studies for a long time together, we may for a few moments glance at them.

Though younger than her brother, SARAH was the eldest sister. When six or seven years of age, her father taught her Hebrew, and among other good customs she early began to take notes of sermons, so that before she reached her threescore and ten she had many fair-written volumes—the record of sweet Sabbaths and endeared solemnities. Married to Mr. Savage, a substantial farmer and a pious man, in the abundance of a farm-house she found

ample means for indulging her charitable disposition ; and whilst blessed by the poor, to whose necessities she ministered, she was beloved by grateful friends, to whom her Christian composure and tender sympathy made her a welcome visiter in seasons of anxiety or sorrow. Through life she retained the bookish habits which she acquired at Broad Oak, and found time to read a great deal, and to copy for the use of her children many of those Christian biographies which were then circulated in manuscript, and not intended for the press. But her superior understanding and elevated tastes did not disqualify her for the more irksome duties of her station. She verified the remark that " Educated persons excel in the meanest things, and refined minds possess the most common sense." She made all the better farmer's wife for being Philip Henry's daughter ; and the main difference betwixt the cultivated lady and the vulgar housewife was, that she did more things, and did them better. In the morning she visited the dairy, the kitchen, and the market, and then it seemed as if she was all day alike in the parlour and the nursery. Besides clothing her household, she found time to make garments for the poor ; and by lying down with a book beside her, she contrived to improve her mind, and read the works of such theologians as Owen, and Flavel, and Howe. Like her father, and most of the Puritans, she possessed a serene and tranquil spirit ; and during the forty years of her married life was never

known to lose her temper. Doubtless much of her successful industry, as well as the quiet dignity of her character, must be ascribed to this meek self-possession; for whilst her notable neighbours deemed it needful to screech commands over all the house, and follow each blundering menial in a perpetual fluster, the simplicity and forethought of Mrs. Savage's directions saved a world of trouble, and all things appeared to adjust and expedite themselves around her calm and gentle presence. Her new home was near her parents, and besides frequent visits, she was often getting a word in season from the ready pen of her loving father. "If you would keep warm in this cold season (January 1692), take these four directions:—1. Get into the sun. Under his blessed beams there are warmth and comfort. 2. Go near the fire. 'Is not my Word like fire?' How many cheering passages are there! 3. Keep in motion and action, stirring up the grace and gift of God that is in you. 4. And seek Christian converse and communion. 'How can one be warm alone?'" Along with the piety of her father, she inherited much of his observant eye and spiritual mind; and many of her remarks are not only striking in themselves, but derive a charm from the little things which first suggested them:—"Seeing other creatures clean and white in the same place where the swine were all over mire, I thought it did represent good and bad men in the same place; the one defiled by the same temptations which the other escape

through the grace of God and watchfulness." "I was affected lately when I saw our newly-sown garden, which we had secured so carefully, as we thought, from fowls, and had closely covered it, yet receive as much hurt by the unseen mole, which roots up and destroys. Lord grant this be not the case of my poor soul! Many good seeds are sown. Line upon line. Daily hearing or reading some good truths. And, by the grace of God, with my good education, I have been kept from many outward sins; but I have great reason to fear the unseen mole of heart-corruption, pride, covetousness. These work secretly, but dangerously; Lord, do thou undertake for me." "The coals coming to the fire with ice upon them at first seemed as though they would put out the fire, but afterwards they made it burn more fiercely. I had this meditation: It is often so with me. That which seems against me is really for me. Have not afflictions worked for my good? Sometimes I have gone to an ordinance, as these coals to the fire, all cold and frozen, and there I have been melted. My love and desire have been inflamed. That it hath not oftener been so has been my own fault." But no extract from her journals can set in a more interesting light this admirable woman than the following lines recording the death of her only surviving son:—"1721, Feb. 15. My dear Philip was seized with the fatal distemper, the small-pox. Many, many fervent prayers were put up for him, both in closets and con-

gregations; but on Monday, Feb. 27, between one and two o'clock, he breathed his last; the blessed spirit took wing, I trust, to the world of everlasting rest and joy. The desire of our eyes, concerning whom we were ready to say, 'This son shall comfort us;' once all our joy, now all our tears. Near twenty-two years of age, he was just beginning to appear in public business, sober and pious. A true lover of his friends, of whom he said on his death-bed, 'I lay them down as I do my body, in hope to meet again every way better.' . . . I do not think the worse of God, or of prayer, for this dispensation; yet sometimes I am much oppressed. I find that deceit lies in generals. How often have I in word and in tongue given up and devoted my *all*—yoke-fellow, children, estate—and all without mental reservation. And now, when God comes to try me in but one dear comfort, with what difficulty can I part with him! O this wicked heart! Lord, I am thine. Though thou shouldst strip me of all my children, and of all my comforts here, yet if thou give me thyself, and clear up to me my interest in the everlasting covenant, it is enough. That blessed covenant has enough in it to gild the most gloomy dispensation of Providence. I have condoling letters daily from my friends. Their words, indeed, do reach my case, but cannot reach my heart."

The second sister was CATHARINE, who became the wife of Dr. Tylston, a pious physician in Ches-

ter; but we have failed in obtaining any farther information regarding her.

The third was ELEANOR. Her gracious disposition was easily seen through all the timidity and diffidence of her retiring nature; and after her death her private papers exhibited the same anxiety to cultivate heart religion, and to grow in knowledge, which distinguished all her family. Like her youngest sister, she was married to a tradesman in Chester, and then took the name of Radford.

That youngest sister was ANN. The sweetness of her temper, and her aptitude for learning, made her a special favourite with her father, and he used to call his Nancy "the diamond in his ring." As she grew up, her early dispositions took the form of a cheerful activity and obligingness, which exceedingly endeared her to her friends, whilst her happy and contented piety was constantly reminding them that wisdom's ways are pleasantness. She used to spend much of the Sabbath in singing psalms of praise; and the kindliness of her nature, and her loving confidence in the goodness of the Lord, made her visits a peculiar comfort in the house of mourning. And, lest God's mercies should slip out of memory, she used to mark them down. The following is one list of "Family Mercies:"—"The house preserved from fire, June 1690; the family begun to be built up; children preserved from the perils of infancy. Two of my near relations' children taken off quickly by death; mine of the same age

spared, March 1693. One child of a dear friend burnt to death ; another neighbour's child drowned lately, yet mine preserved. One of the children preserved from a dangerous fall down a pair of stairs into the street ; the recovery of both of them from the small-pox, May 1695. Both recovered from a malignant fever when they had been given up ; at the same time two servants brought low by it, yet raised up. Ourselves preserved from the same distemper, when two dear relations, mother and daughter, fell by it. Wonder of mercy not to be forgotten !" It was of this fever, and within a few weeks of one another, that Mrs. Hutton and her sister Radford died, in 1697. It was a time of heavy trial in a once happy circle, for their venerated father had died the year before. "Yet God is good," was the dying testimony of this meek believer, and she entreated that none would think the worse of family religion for the afflictions which had followed so fast on them. "I am not weary of living, but I am weary of sinning. I would live as Christ lives, and where Christ lives, and that I am sure will be heaven."

This was the pious family in which MATTHEW HENRY was born. Of these intelligent and affectionate sisters he was the only brother, and of those godly parents he was the eldest surviving child. He was born at Broad Oak, Oct. 18, 1662.

When three years old, it is said that he could read the Bible distinctly, and he early showed a

strong passion for books. Lest he should injure his health by excessive application, his mother was frequently obliged to drag the little student from his closet, and chase him out into the fields. He had for his tutor Mr. Turner, a young man who then lived at Broad Oak, and who afterwards published a folio volume of "Remarkable Providences;" but whether Mr. Turner had then acquired his taste for extraordinary narratives, or whether the imagination of his pupil was inflamed by their recital, we cannot tell. There is no love of the marvellous in his writings. But in the formation of his character, and the direction of his studies, by far the most influential element was veneration for his learned and saintly sire. The father's devotion and industry inspired the son. And surely this was as it ought to be. Though love to a pious father is not piety, yet with the children of the godly the fifth commandment has often proved the portico and gateway to the first; and perhaps theirs is the most scriptural devotion whose first warm feelings towards their "Father who is in heaven" mingle with tender memories of their father that was on earth. No character could be more impressive than Philip Henry's, no spirit more impressible than that of Philip Henry's son. Till an upgrown lad he was in his father's constant company. He witnessed the holy elevation and cheerful serenity of his blameless life. He was aware how much his father prayed in secret, and besides occasional

sermons, he heard his daily expositions and exhortations at the worship of the family. And from what he saw, as much as from what he heard, the conviction grew with his growth, that of all things the most amiable and august is true religion, and of all lives the most blessed is a walk with God. A hallowed sunshine irradiated Broad Oak all the week ; but like rays in a focus, through the Sabbath atmosphere every peaceful feeling and heavenly influence fell in sacred and softening intensity. On these days of the Son of Man, the thoughtful boy was often remarkably solemnized ; and when the services of the sanctuary were over, would haste to his little chamber to weep and pray, and could scarcely be prevailed on to come down and share the family meal. On one of these occasions his father had preached on the grain of mustard-seed, and, wistful to possess this precious germ, he took the opportunity of a walk with his father to tell his fears and anxieties about himself. The conversation is not recorded, but he afterwards told his confidante, his sister, that he hoped he too had received a "grain of grace," and that in time it might come to something. With his young sisters he held a little prayer-meeting on the Saturday afternoons ; and amid the sequestered sanctity of their peaceful home, and under the loving eye and wise instruction of their tender parents, these olive plants grew round about the table.

As we have already noticed, the learning and

religious experience of Philip Henry drew to his house many of his most renowned contemporaries: such as the quaint and lively Richard Steel; the venerable Francis Tallents; the accomplished but extremely modest John Meldrum of Newport, after whose funeral Mr. Henry said, "The relics of so much learning, piety, and humility, I have not seen this great while laid in a grave;" William Cook, "an aged, painful, faithful minister" at Chester, so absorbed in study and in communion with a better country, that he scarce ever adverted to any of the things around him; and Edward Lawrence, whose emphatic counsels, *e. g.*, "Tremble to borrow twopence," "Make no man angry or sad," did not sink so deep into the memories of his own motherless children as into those of their happier companions at Broad Oak. On a mind so pious and reverential as was that of the younger Henry, the sight and conversations of so many distinguished ministers produced a strong impression; and, united to his natural gravity and studiousness, predisposed himself for the ministry. It was his great delight to be in their society, or in the company of warm-hearted Christians, listening to their discourse, or essaying to join in it. He inherited all his father's affection for the Bible, doting over its every sentence with curious avidity, and treasuring up its sayings in his heart. And having long practised the transcription of sermons, anon he began to make them.

At the age of eighteen his father took him to the

academy of Mr. Doolittle at Hackney. The journey on horseback was effected in five days. On arriving at London, he writes, "I never saw so many coaches. If I should say we saw somewhat above a hundred after we came into the town, I should speak within the compass." The following extract from his first letter to his sisters gives a glimpse of the state of non-conforming churches in London in the year 1680, and presents the young student in an interesting point of view :—

"On Saturday my father went to Islington, and I went to cousin Hotchkiss and Mr. Church's. Mr. Church came with us to see first Bedlam, and then the Monument. The Monument is almost like a spire steeple, set up in the place where the great fire began. It is 345 steps high, and thence we had a sight of the whole city. Yesterday we went to Mr. Doolittle's meeting-place—his church I may call it, for I believe there is many a church that will not hold so many people. There are several galleries; it is all pewed; and a brave pulpit, a great height above the people. They began between nine and ten in the morning, and after the singing of a Psalm, Mr. Doolittle first prayed and then preached, and that was all. His text was Jer. xvii. 9. In the afternoon my father preached on Lam. iii. 22, at the same place. Indeed, Mr. Lawrence told him at first he must not come to London to be idle; and they are resolved he shall not; for he is to preach the two next Sabbaths, I believe, at Mr. Steel's and

Mr. Lawrence's. On Sabbath-day night, about five o'clock, cousin Robert and I went to another place, and heard, I cannot say another sermon, but a piece of another, by a very young man, one Mr. Shower, and a most excellent sermon it was, on the evil of sin. The truth was, we could scarce get any room, it was so crowded.

"This morning we went to Islington, where I saw the place we are like to abide in, and do perceive our rooms are like to be very strait and little ; that Mr. Doolittle is very studious and diligent, and that Mrs. Doolittle and her daughter are very fine and gallant.

"Dear sisters, I am almost ever thinking of you and home ; but dare scarce entertain a thought of returning, lest it discompose me. I find it a great change.

"Pray do not forget me in your thoughts, nor in your prayers, but remember me in both. So, commending you all to the care and protection of Almighty God, whose kingdom ruleth over all, I rest, your ever loving and affectionate brother,

"MATTHEW HENRY."

They were troublous times, and it was not long before Mr. Doolittle's academy was dispersed. Matthew Henry went back to Broad Oak, and the next time he returned to London it was to study law. He had not abandoned his original destination ; but as it was then very problematical whether non-con-

formists would ever be allowed freely to exercise their ministry, it is possible that he may have wished to secure to himself the alternative of an honourable profession. He never became an enthusiast in his legal studies ; but he learned enough to add considerably to his store of information, and he always looked back with pleasure to friendships which he formed at Gray's Inn.

It was in 1687, when the penalties against dissent were somewhat relaxed, that Matthew Henry was ordained a minister. On the eve of this important event he devoted a considerable time to self-examination ; and in the paper in which he records its results, he writes—

“ I think I can say with confidence that I do not design to take up the ministry as a trade to live by, or to enrich myself, out of the greediness of filthy lucre. No ! I hope I aim at nothing but *souls* ; and if I gain those, though I should lose all my worldly comforts by it, I shall reckon myself to have made a good bargain.

“ I think I can say with as much assurance, that my design is not to get myself a name amongst men, or to be talked of in the world as one that makes somewhat of a figure. No ; that is a poor business. If I have but a good name with God I think I have enough, though among men I be reviled, and have my name trampled upon as mire in the streets. I prefer the good word of my Master far before the good word of my fellow-servants.

"I can appeal to God that I have no design in the least to maintain a party, or to keep up any schismatical faction ; my heart rises against the thoughts of it. I hate dividing principles and practices, and whatever others are, I am for peace and healing ; and if my blood would be a sufficient balsam, I would gladly part with the last drop of it for the closing up of the bleeding wounds of differences that are amongst true Christians."

For five-and-twenty years Mr. Henry was minister of the Presbyterian congregation at Chester, and many things combined to make it a happy pastorate. Broad Oak was not far from Chester, and till the year 1696, when Philip Henry removed to the better country, many delightful visits were exchanged between the father and the son. Wrenbury Wood, the home of his elder sister, Mrs. Savage, was still nearer ; and by their respective marriages, his other three sisters all settled in Chester, and with their families became members of his flock. And his congregation increased. Not only was it needful to enlarge the place of worship, but many of his hearers were men of education and mental enlargement, to whom it was animating to preach, and in whose intelligent Christian fellowship it was pleasant to spend his occasional hours. The number of communicants was eventually 350, and Mr. Henry had the greatest joy which an earnest minister can have—he knew of many to whose salvation God had blessed his instructions and entreaties.

And so long as he remained with them he had that other greatest joy—he saw his children walking in the truth.

Like his father, Mr. Henry found great delight in study; and like that father, his turn of mind was systematic. His sermons were a series. To the volatile auditories of modern times there would be something appalling in a body of divinity which occupied the Sabbaths of fourteen years. But the later Puritans, especially, were lovers of order and routine; congregations were more stationary, and the world had then a feeling of latitude and leisure which it can never know again. And perhaps the regular recurrence of similar services, and the weekly resumption of the stated subject, and the placid distillation of scriptural lessons, were as congenial to Sabbath rest and spiritual growth as the endless variety and turbulent excitement which our own generation, more languid or more mercurial, craves. And there is no reason why method should produce monotony. In the hands of Matthew Henry, besides its continuous instructiveness, method was often a stimulus to attention, and an additional means of vivacity. On the subject, “Put off the old man, put on the new,” he gave a course of many sermons in the following scheme:—

- “1. Put off pride, and put on humility.
2. Put off passion, and put on meekness.
3. Put off covetousness, and put on contentment.
4. Put off contention, and put on peaceableness.
5. Put off murmuring, and put on patience.

6. Put off melancholy, and put on cheerfulness.
7. Put off vanity, and put on seriousness.
8. Put off uncleanness, and put on chastity.
9. Put off drunkenness, and put on temperance.
10. Put off deceitfulness, and put on honesty.
11. Put off hatred, and put on love.
12. Put off hypocrisy, and put on sincerity.
13. Put off bad discourse, and put on good discourse.
14. Put off bad company, and put on good company.
15. Put off security, and put on watchfulness.
16. Put off slothfulness, and put on diligence.
17. Put off folly, and put on prudence.
18. Put off fear, and put on hope.
19. Put off a life of sense, and put on a life of faith.
20. Put off self, and put on Jesus Christ."

At another time he gave a set of sermons on "Penitent Reflections and Pious Resolutions," taking for his general text, "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies," and selecting for particular reflections and resolutions such antithetic texts as—

1. "I have sinned."—Ps. xli. 4.
"I will do so no more."—Job xxxiv. 32.
2. "I have done foolishly."—2 Sam. ii. 10.
"I will behave myself wisely."—Ps. ci. 2.
3. "I have perverted that which is right."—Job xxxiii. 27.
"I will never forget thy precept."—Ps. cxix. 93, &c.

Those who are acquainted with that beautiful work, "Buchanan's Comfort in Affliction," will know where to find a recent example akin to the foregoing, in which a leading text is the subject, and other texts happily selected supply the particular instances.

In those primitive days, Mr. Henry's Sabbath-morning congregation met at nine o'clock. The service usually began with singing the hundredth Psalm; and, after a short prayer, Mr. Henry expounded a chapter of the Old Testament, having begun with Genesis, and continuing in regular order. Then, after another psalm and a longer prayer, he preached a sermon about an hour in length, and after prayer and singing, the congregation was dismissed with the blessing. The afternoon service was nearly the same, except that it was a chapter of the New Testament which was then expounded. On Thursday evening he gave a lecture, which was well attended by his own people, and to which some Episcopalians came, who did not choose to forsake their own church on the Lord's-day. For this weekly lecture he found a subject which lasted twenty years, in "Scriptural Questions." It was Oct. 1692, when he began with Gen. iii. 9, "Adam, where art thou?" and it was May 1712, when he arrived at Rev. xviii. 18, "What city is like unto this great city?"

The solemnity with which Baptism was administered, and the Lord's Supper celebrated in Matthew Henry's meeting-house, struck many at the time; and from the fervour of his own spirit they proved eminently means of grace. His "Communicant's Companion" is still well known, and by its minute directions, shows how vital to the believer, and how blessed to the affectionate disciple, he deemed a

due commemoration of his dying Lord. His original biographer remarks: "His soul was formed for this ordinance. He was full of love to Christ, and thankfulness to God for Christ."

His tender nature drew him towards the young, and his playful simplicity made him their apt instructor. An hour of every Saturday was devoted to public catechising, and many young persons ascribed their first earnestness in religion to the close dealing and touching addresses with which this exercise was frequently ended.

There were then no religious nor philanthropic societies; but the public spirit of Mr. Henry prompted him to efforts beyond the bounds of his own congregation. When a series of sermons "for the Reformation of Manners" was projected, he did his utmost to promote it, and contributed four of his most able and important addresses. And moved by the miserable case of the prisoners in Chester jail, he was in the habit of visiting them and preaching to them, till the curate of St. Mary's prevailed on the governor to discharge him. In the meanwhile, his disinterested labours had been the means of much good to the criminals.

The great business of Mr. Henry's life was the cultivation of piety in himself and others. His religion was not the less profound that it was mild and evenly; nor is it the less fitted for imitation that it adorned and cheered a life of tranquil tenor. Besides the full and deliberate worship of God in

his family, he abounded in secret prayer. It was his recourse in every undertaking. His sermons were begun, his books were published, his journeys were commenced, and the important steps of his history were taken, with prayer. "What incomes of grace," he wrote, "yea and outward good things, as far as they are indeed good for us, have we by an access to God in Christ ! Such have a companion ready in all their solitudes ; a counsellor in all their doubts ; a comforter in all their sorrows ; a supply in all their wants ; a support under all their burdens ; a shelter in all their dangers ; strength for all their performances ; and salvation ensured by a sweet undeceiving earnest. What is heaven but an everlasting access to God ? and present access is a pledge of it." And as he had devout and confident recourse to the throne of grace, so he was an alert and thankful observer of those providences which answered prayer. He would say that the good things of God's children "are not dispensed out of the basket of common providence, but out of the ark of the covenant ;" and "those mercies are the sweetest which are seen growing upon the root of a promise." Like his cotemporary in Scotland, Thomas Boston, his diary is full of recognitions of God's superintending care and kind interposing hand. Gratitude for mercies was constantly irradiating his path and sweetening his spirit ; and if he sometimes sought the prayers of his friends, he also sought the help of their praises. On special occa-

sions he invited them to his house to join in thanksgiving for recent deliverances or distinguishing favours. "O magnify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together."

In a pre-eminent degree, Mr. Henry possessed a spiritual mind; and of that spirituality one great secret was his devout and delighted observance of the Lord's-day. On it he accumulated all the endearment and veneration of a grateful and conscientious spirit, and in it he collected patience and impulse for the days to come. To him the Sabbath was like a reservoir on the summit of a hill. He was sure that if this day were filled with heavenly things, it would send down its bright and refreshing streams through all the week.

The better to "fix his heart," and help his memory, he kept an occasional journal. As affording the most intimate view of his character, we may give a few extracts from it:—

"June 23, 1696.—This afternoon, about three o'clock, my father's servant came for the doctor, with the tidings that my dear father was taken suddenly ill. I had then some of my friends about me, and they were cheerful with me; but this struck a damp upon all. I had first thought not to have gone till the next day, it being somewhat late and very wet, and had written half a letter to my dear mother, but I could not help going; and I am glad I did go, for I have often thought of that, 2 Kings ii. 10, 'If thou see me when I am taken up

from thee,' &c. The doctor and I came to Broad Oak about eight o'clock, and found him in great extremity of pain; nature, through his great and unwearied labours, unable to bear up, and sinking under the load. As soon as he saw me, he said, 'O son, you are welcome to a dying father; I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand.' A little after midnight, my mother holding his hands as he sat in bed, and I holding the pillow to his back, he very quietly, and without any struggling, groan, or rattling, breathed out his dear soul into the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he had faithfully served."

"July 1.—There are some things I would more particularly engage myself to upon this providence :

"1. To be more grave and serious.

"2. To be more meek and humble, cautious and candid, because these were the graces that my dear father was eminent for, and God owned him in them, and men honoured him for them. I am sensible of too much hastiness of spirit. I would learn to be of a cool, mild spirit.

"3. To be more diligent and industrious in improving my time, for I see it is hasting off apace, and I desire to have it filled up, because I see I must shortly put off this my tabernacle, and there is no working in the grave."

"Oct. 18, 1697.—Through the good hand of my God upon me I, have finished my thirty-fifth year—one half of the age of man. It is now high noon

with me, but my sun may go down at noon. I was affected this morning when alone, in thinking *what* I was born—a rational creature, a helpless creature, and a sinful creature. *Where* I was born—in the church of God, in a land of light, in a house of prayer. *What* I was born for—to glorify God my Maker, and prepare to get to heaven.”

“Jan. 1, 1701.—Being more and more confirmed in my belief of the being and attributes of God, of the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ between God of man, and of the reality and weight of invisible things; and being more and more satisfied that this is the true grace of God wherein I stand, I do solemnly resign and give up my whole self to God in Jesus Christ. I commit my soul and all the concerns of my spiritual state to the grace of God, and to the word of his grace, subjecting myself to the conduct and government of the blessed Spirit, and to his influences and operations, which I earnestly desire and depend upon for the mortifying of my corruptions, the strengthening of my graces, the furnishing me for every good word and work, and the ripening of me for heaven. I commit my body and all the concerns of my outward condition to the providence of God, to be ordered and disposed by the wisdom and will of my heavenly Father. Not knowing the things which may befall me this year, I refer myself to God. Whether it shall be my dying year or no, I know not; but it is my earnest expectation and hope that the Lord

Jesus Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or death, by health or sickness, by plenty or poverty, by liberty or restraint, by preaching or silence, by comfort or sorrow. Welcome, welcome, the will of God, whatever it be."

"Oct. 18, 1701.—I have thought much this day what a great variety of cross events I am liable to while in the body, and how uncertain what may befall me in the next year of my life; pain, or sickness, or broken bones, loss in my estate, death of dear relations, reproach, divisions in the congregation, public restraints and troubles: my fortieth year may be as Israel's was, the last of my sojourning in this wilderness. The worst of evils would be sin and scandal. The Lord keep me from that, and fit me for any other."

"Dec. 31, 1703.—Unfixedness of thought, a wretched desultoriness. Some speak of time well spent in thinking; but I find, unless in speaking, reading, or writing, my thinking doth not turn to much account. Though I have had comfort in some broken good thoughts, yet I can seldom fix my heart to a chain of them. O that the thought of my heart may be forgiven!"

"I have oft bewailed my barrenness in good discourse, and unskilfulness in beginning it, and coldness of concern for the souls of others; and in reflection on this year I find it has not been much better. I bless God I love good discourse, and would promote it, but I want zeal."

"Jan. 1, 1705.—I know this is the will of God, even my sanctification. Lord, grant that this year I may be more holy, and walk more closely than ever in all holy conversation. I earnestly desire to be filled with holy thoughts, to be carried out in holy affections, determined by holy aims and intentions, and governed in all my words and actions by holy principles. O that a golden thread of holiness may run through the whole web of this year!

"I know it is the will of God that I should be useful, and by his grace I will be so. Lord, thou knowest it is the top of my ambition in this world to do good, and to be serviceable to the honour of Christ and the welfare of precious souls. I would fain do good in the pulpit, and good with my pen; and, which I earnestly desire to abound more in, to do good by my common converse."

"Jan. 1, 1706.—I know not what the year shall bring forth; but I know it shall bring forth nothing amiss to me, if God be my God in covenant; if it bring forth *death*, that I hope shall quite finish sin and free me from it. Lord, let thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word. I commit my family to my heavenly Father, to God, even my own God, my father's God, my children's God. O, pour out thy Spirit upon my seed, thy blessing, that blessing of blessings, upon my offspring, that they may be praising God on earth when I am praising him in heaven."

"Dec. 31, 1707.—I begin to feel my journey in my bones, and I desire to be thereby loosened from the world, and from this body. The death of my dear and honoured mother this year has been a sore breach upon my comfort; for she was my skilful, faithful counsellor; and it is an intimation to me that now, in the order of nature, I must go next. . . . As to my ministry here, Mr. Mainwaring's leaving me and his wife has been very much my discouragement. But Providence so ordered it that Mr. Harvey's congregation are generally come into us, or else we began to dwindle, so that I should have gone on very heavily."

"March 8, 1713, London.—I preached Mr. Rosewell's evening lecture, Ps. lxxxix. 15, 'The joyful sound.' As I came home I was robbed. The thieves took from me about ten or eleven shillings. My remarks upon it were,—1. What reason have I to be thankful to God, who have travelled so much, and yet was never robbed before! 2. What a deal of evil the love of money is the root of, that four men would venture their lives and souls for about half-a-crown a-piece! 3. See the power of Satan in the children of disobedience. 4. See the vanity of worldly wealth; how soon we may be stripped of it. How loose, therefore, we should sit to it."

As might easily be surmised from the extent of his writings, Mr. Henry was a hard student. His plan was to rise early: he was usually in his study at five o'clock, sometimes as early as four; and

except the hour allowed for breakfast and morning worship, remained there till noon, often till four in the afternoon. Nothing more tried his meek and patient spirit than intrusions on his studying time. "I am always best when alone. No place is like my own study: no company like good books, especially the book of God." But with all his love of leisure and retirement, he was no hermit. He was rich in friends. He was much consulted by them; and besides an extensive correspondence, he showed his interest in them by his minute and affectionate intercessions. "How sweet a thing it is to pray, minding a particular errand!" That errand was often some conjuncture in the history of a friend or a friend's family. And nothing leaves a softer halo round his memory than his filial and fraternal piety. His conduct was a reverential transcript from his father's bright example—the best tribute which love and veneration can render; and his own life was a sermon on the text which he selected after his beloved mother died, "Her children shall rise up, and call her blessed." He and his sisters grew up together in the holy atmosphere of their Broad Oak home; and though they all eventually had houses of their own, they never knew a suspicion or a quarrel, a dry word or a divided interest.

When the first volumes of his Commentary had been published, and Mr. Henry's talents as a divine and an expositor were known, he received repeated calls to come and be a London minister. He was

invited to succeed Dr. Bates, then Mr. Nathanael Taylor, then Mr. Spademan; but all these invitations he resolutely and successfully refused. At last the congregation at Hackney made an onset which he could no longer withstand. After a year of hesitation and painful anxiety, he agreed to go. Among many considerations which influenced him, the two following were the most powerful:—"There is manifestly a much wider door of opportunity to do good opened to me at London than is at Chester, in respect to the frequency and variety of week-day occasions of preaching, and the great numbers of the auditors. The prospect I have of improving these opportunities, and of doing good to souls thereby, is, I confess, the main inducement to me to think of removing thither.

"Though the people at Chester are a most loving people, and many of them have had, and have, an exceeding value for me and my ministry, yet I have not been without my discouragements, and those such as have tempted me to think that my work in this place has been in a great measure done; many that have been catechised with us have left us, and very few have been added to us."

It was on the 18th of May 1712, that Mr. Henry began his labours at Hackney. He was in his fiftieth year, and had been five-and-twenty years at Chester. He found abundance of that occupation to which he had looked forward with such desire, having opportunities of preaching almost every day of the week,

and sometimes twice or thrice on the same day. And probably it was in this way that he accomplished most; for his Hackney congregation was not large. He found only a hundred communicants. It was not a lively period in the history of religion anywhere, and the London churches widely shared the spiritual torpor which, soon after his decease, transformed the Presbyterian chapel at Chester into a Unitarian meeting-house.

On leaving his former flock, Mr. Henry promised to visit them once a year. In the summer of 1713 he fulfilled that promise, and again, in May 1714, he quitted Hackney for the same purpose. The two last Sabbaths of this visit were employed on the texts, "There remaineth a rest for the people of God," and, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." That rest was nearer than he knew. On Monday, June 21, he set out on his return to London. He was engaged to preach at Nantwich on the way. His horse threw him, but he denied that he had sustained any injury. Accordingly, he preached on Prov. xxxi. 18; but every one noticed that he was not so lively as usual. He was short, and afterwards very heavy and sleepy. He asked his friends to pray for him, "for now I cannot pray for myself." He remarked, "Sin is bitter," and said, "I bless God I have inward supports." But he was soon seized with apoplexy, and at eight on the following morning, June 22, he fell asleep.

On the following day his eldest sister, Mrs. Savage, has this entry in her journal :—

“ Wednesday, June 23.—I went to the place, to take leave of the dear earthen vessel, in which was lodged such a treasure, and shall always remember there was nothing of death to be seen in his face, but rather something of a smile. How is the gold become dim, and the fine gold changed ! That head, that hand, so fitted for service, now cold and moveless. Lord, what is man, the greatest, the best ! When God bids Moses go up and die on Mount Nebo, it is observable he adds, ‘ As Aaron, thy brother, was gathered to his people.’ Sure this should mind me of my own dissolution, as sprung from the same good olive, and spending our childhood together in much comfort and pleasure, under that dear and benign shadow. I have reason to think he loved me the best of all his sisters, and it is with satisfaction I think of the love I had for him, and the great unity that was amongst us then, so that I do not remember one angry or unkind word betwixt us. Though I well remember that I have thought my dear mother had most tenderness and love for my brother, yet I was so far from envying for his sake, that I complied with her, and loved him with a pure heart fervently. I remember the many cares and fears I had for him, when he was ill of a fever at London, at Mr. Doolittle’s, and the strong cries and tears I offered in secret to my heavenly Father, accompanied with a purpose of a par-

ticular act of religion that I would be found in, if God should hear prayer for him, and spare him to us, greatly dreading how my dear parents could bear the stroke. God was graciously pleased then to hearken to our petitions, and give him to us again; but, after a time, my good purposes (to my shame) proved abortive."

"Friday, June 25.—We gathered up the mantle of this dear Elijah, took the remains to Chester, lodged them in the silent tomb, 'the house appointed for all living.' We laid him in Trinity Church, by his dear first wife, accompanied with a vast crowd, desiring to pay their tribute to his blessed memory."

In 1687, Mr. Henry married Miss Hardware, a young lady remarkable for her beauty and piety; but, when they had been only eighteen months united, she was seized with the small-pox, and died. His second wife was Miss Warburton, of Grange, the virtuous daughter of a respected family. By this marriage a son and five daughters survived him. The son inherited the estate of Grange, and assumed the maternal name. It is feared that he did not inherit his father's piety. For some time he represented the city of Chester in Parliament.

By his sermons, and his abundant personal labours, Matthew Henry served his generation; by his industrious and ingenious pen he has done a service to the world. From time to time he published tracts and treatises, which met with some attention,

even in that drowsy age, and many of which have been highly valued since. The "Pleasantness of a Religious Life" has been often republished, and no treatise on the Lord's Supper is better known or prized than the "Communicant's Companion." Others of his writings, though less widely known, are prized by those who have been attracted by their earnestness and solid worth. In reading his "Directions for Daily Communion with God," the interest and profit of the perusal will be augmented, by remembering that it was his own daily effort to "walk with God."

However, these and all his other treatises, enough to engross the leisure hours of any other pastor, if not to immortalize any other divine, were incidental efforts on the part of this Herculean student, and mere episodes in a colossal undertaking. His industry, piety, and sanctified genius, have left their peerless memorial in "An Exposition of the Old and New Testament;" and, like the *Penseroso*, and other poems, which are read with double interest because their author wrote "Paradise Lost," his minor writings are excellent in themselves, and should be studied with keener expectation by those who remember that their author wrote Henry's Exposition.

It is with literary monuments as with architectural trophies; we like not only to know who reared them, but how they went to work, and we would be glad to learn how far they enjoyed their labour, and what were their emotions when the

task was done. Kennicott's process in collating the Hebrew text, and Johnson's operations in compiling his mighty Lexicon, are among the most interesting curiosities of literature; and few passages in autobiography are more thrilling than those, for instance, in which Gibbon records his moonlight musings when the "Decline and Fall" was finished, and Pollok describes the rapture in which he completed the "Course of Time." Few achievements can be so vast as a continuous commentary on the Bible. We are therefore grateful to Dr. Adam Clarke's biographer for telling us how, during the forty years that his book was in building, he would sometimes be so absorbed that he did not observe the knock at the study-door, but was discovered on his bended knees with the pen in his hand, and the paper before him; and how, when the last sentence was written, he led his son into the library, and surprised him by the new spectacle of the great table, cleared of all its folios, and nothing but a Bible remaining. "This, Joseph, is the happiest period I have enjoyed for years. I have written the last word. I have put away the chains that would remind me of my bondage. And *there* have I returned the deep thanks of a grateful soul to the God who has shown me such great and continued kindness." And we can sympathize with his family, who, sharing in his emancipation, testified their joy by presenting him with a silver vase. And it exceedingly enhances our interest in Scott's

Notes, when we remember the circumstances of bodily suffering and financial anxiety in which they were written; and if we sometimes deem them common-place or meagre, we rebuke our discontent by asking, "How could they be better when the press was always clanking at his heels, and he often rose from a bed of sickness to write them?" Matthew Henry did not live to finish his great undertaking, but to the research of his biographer we are indebted for some interesting particulars regarding the commencement and progress of the work. It was a labour of love, and like the best productions of the pen, flowed from the abundance of the author's mind. The commentary was all in Matthew Henry before a word of it was written down. In his father's house, as we have seen, the Bible was expounded every day, and he and his sisters had preserved ample notes of their father's terse and aphoristic observations. Then, during his own Chester ministry, he went over more than once the whole Bible in simple explanations to his people. Like the Spartan babe, whose cradle was his father's shield, it would scarcely be a figure to say that the Bible was the pillow of his infant head; and, familiar with it from his most tender years, it dwelt richly in him all his days. It was the pivot round which his meditations, morning, noon, and evening, turned; and whatever other knowledge came in his way, he pounced on it with more or less avidity as it served to elucidate or enforce some Bible saying.

What has been remarked of an enthusiast in Egyptian antiquities—that he had grown quite pyramidal—may be said of the Presbyterian minister at Chester; he had grown entirely biblical. He had no ideas which had not either been first derived from Scripture, or afterwards dissolved in it. And as his shrewd sense, his kindly nature, his devotional temperament, and his extensive information, were all thoroughly scripturalized, it needed no forcing nor straining. It was but to draw the spigot, and out flowed the racy exposition. “The work has been to me its own wages, and the pleasure recompense enough for all the pains.”

Much was incidentally jotted down, and the materials lay affluent about him before he commenced writing for the press. It was the advice of the Rev. Samuel Clarke, and other friends, which moved him to begin, and the following entry in his journal announces the commencement of the work:—“Nov. 12, 1704.—This night, after many thoughts of heart, and many prayers concerning it, I began my Notes on the Old Testament. It is not likely I shall live to finish it, or if I should, that it should be of public service, for I am not *par negotio*; yet, in the strength of God, and, I hope, with a single eye to his glory, I set about it that I may endeavour something, and spend my time to some good purpose, and let the Lord make what use he pleaseth of me. I go about it with fear and trembling, lest I exercise myself in things too high for

me. The Lord help me to set about it with great humility." Yes — "Fear and trembling," and "many prayers"—these are the secret of its success. All the author's fitness, and all his fondness for the work would have availed little, had not the Lord made it grow. In September 1706, he finished the Pentateuch, and on the 21st of November that year, he writes: "This evening I received a parcel of the Exposition of the Pentateuch. I desire to bless God that he has given me to see it finished. I had comfort from that promise, 'Thou shalt find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.'" That volume came out separately, and though near her eightieth year, his mother lived to see it, and, scarcely hoping to read all the volume, the good old lady began with Deuteronomy. Every second year produced another volume, till April 17, 1714, he records: "Finished Acts, and with it the fifth volume. Blessed be God that has helped me and spared me. All the praise be to God." Two months after he ceased from all his labours, and Dr. Evans and others took up the fallen pen. They completed a sixth volume, but did not continue "Matthew Henry."

The zest with which he began lasted all along. So dear was the employment, that it was not easy to divert him from it, and each possible moment was devoted to it. Even when roused from slumber by illness in the family, his eye would brighten at the sight of it, and he would draw in his studying-

chair, "to do a little at the Exposition." What he says in the preface to the Prophecies—his least successful volume—will awaken the fellow-feeling of the reader, and remind him of Bishop Horne's touching farewell to the Book of Psalms : "The pleasure I have had in studying and meditating on those parts of these prophecies which are plain and practical, and especially those that are evangelical, has been an abundant balance to and recompense for the harder tasks we have met with in other parts that are more obscure. In many parts of this field the treasure must be digged for, as that in the mines; but in other parts the surface is covered with rich and precious products, with corn and flocks, and of which we may say as was said of Noah, 'These same have comforted us greatly concerning our work, and the toil of our hands,' and have made it very pleasant and delightful. God grant it may be no less so to the readers!"

It would be easy to name commentators more critical, more philosophical, or more severely erudite; but none so successful in making the Bible understood. And the question with sensible readers will always be, not, What did the commentator bring to the Bible? but, What did he bring out of it? And tried by this test, Henry will bear the perpetual palm. His curious inferences, and his just though ingenious "Notes," are such as could only have occurred to one mighty in the Scriptures, and minute in the particular text; and to the eager Bible-stu-

dent, they often present themselves with as welcome surprise as the basket of unexpected ore which a skilful miner sends up from a deserted shaft. Nor dare we admire them the less because detected in passages where our duller eye or blunter hammer had often explored in vain. On the other hand, it is possible to name some who have commented more fully on particular books; but most of them are something more than expositions. They are homiletic notes and expository dissertations. In the language of quaint old Berridge, a preacher is a "Gospel-baker." In the same idiom, a commentator should be a "Bible-miller." Bread-corn must be bruised; and it is the business of the skilful interpreter to give nothing but the text transformed—bread-corn in the guise of flour. This was what Matthew Henry did, and he left it to "Gospel-bakers" to add the salt and leaven, or mayhap the sugar and the laurel-leaf, and make a sermon or an essay, as the case might be.

To its author the Exposition was a blessed toil; but he could not foresee the wide acceptance and growing favour which awaited it. He could not anticipate that the most powerful minds of after-ages should be its most ardent admirers, or that the panegyrics should be passed on it which we know that Ryland, and Hall, and Chalmers have pronounced. Still less could it occur to him that the kindness with which cotemporaries received it should be a hundredfold exceeded by a generation

so fastidious and book-surfeited as our own. But could its subsequent history have been revealed to his benignant eye, the circumstance which would have elicited the gladdest and most thankful sparkle would have been to behold it in thousands of Christian families, the Sabbath-companion and the household book. It is not only through the glass doors of stately book-cases that its gilt folios shine, nor on the study-shelves of manse and other evangelical parsonages that its brown symbol of orthodoxy may be recognised ; but in the parlour of many a quiet tradesman, and the cupboard of many a little farmer, and on the drawers-head of many a mechanic or day-labourer, the well-conned quartos hold their ancestral station, themselves an abundant library, and hallowed as the heirloom of a bygone piety. In the words of a beloved friend who has done much for Henry's Commentary, "It has now lasted more than one hundred and thirty years, and is at this moment more popular than ever, gathering strength as it rolls down the stream of time ; and it bids fair to be *The Comment* for all coming time. True to God, true to nature, true to common sense, and true to the text, how can it ever be superseded ! Waiting pilgrims will be reading it when the last trumpet sounds, Come to judgment."

LIFE OF BISHOP HALL.

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IN a posthumous volume entitled "The Shaking of the Olive Tree," first appeared two autobiographical tracts—the one, "Observations of some Specialties of Divine Providence in the Life of Joseph Hall, Bishop of Norwich;" the other, "Hard Measure," setting forth the sufferings of his later years. With much good taste these sketches have been frequently reprinted, where a more formal Life might have been expected; and, in the present instance, the same course might have been pursued with advantage. But as some passages in these fragments refer to subjects of trivial or temporary importance, and other sources of information are open, we have endeavoured, by omitting the one, to find place for the other.

Bishop Hall's object in leaving the chief events of his life on record, was worthy of the man: "Not out of a vain affectation of my own glory, which I know how little it can avail me when I am gone hence, but out of a sincere desire to give glory to my God, whose wonderful providence I have noted

in all my ways, have I recorded some remarkable passages of my fore-past life. What I have done is worthy of nothing but silence and forgetfulness; but what God hath done for me is worthy of everlasting and thankful memory."

JOSEPH HALL was born July 1, 1574, at Bristow Park, in the parish of Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire. His parentage was "honest and well-allowed." His father held an office under the Earl of Huntingdon, which enabled him to procure a good education for his twelve children, and warranted his ambition that one of them should enter the ministry, at a time when a university was not the only avenue to the Church. But the instructions and impressions which Joseph received from his mother were a better qualification than the lessons of all his teachers; and the consciousness of their value in after days invested the memory of the gentle giver with an affection doubly filial. Winifred Bambridge was the Monica of Bishop Hall. A body always feeble, and often anguish-stricken, was the appropriate tenement of a spirit sorrowfully and sorely exercised. But happily the clouds which at one time shaded the piety of this excellent woman, did not render it forbidding to the more genial temper of her son. He rejoiced in the light when others would have complained of the halo, nor refused to be conducted to the kingdom by a guide whose countenance was sometimes sad. And he at last had the satisfaction of seeing her set free from

these vexing thoughts, and deriving the joy of a religion of hope. "What with these trials so had she profited in the school of Christ, that it was hard for any friend to come from her discourse no whit holier. How often have I blessed the memory of those divine passages of experimental divinity which I have heard from her mouth! What day did she pass without a large task of private devotion, whence she would still come forth with a countenance of undissembled mortification! Never any lips have read to me such feeling lectures of piety; neither have I known any soul that more accurately practised them than her own. Temptations, desertions, and spiritual comforts, were her usual theme; shortly, for I can hardly take off my pen from so exemplary a subject, her life and death were saint-like."

It was at the public school of his native village that he received the elements of his education. After spending "some years, not altogether indiligently, under the ferule of such masters as the place afforded, and attaining some competent ripeness for the university," as he was now fifteen years of age, it became a subject of much deliberation to his father, and anxious interest to himself, where he should next be sent. His father's fortune, not so large as his family, rendered the university almost unattainable; and Joseph's schoolmaster, in his zeal for so meritorious a pupil, had privately negociated with Mr. Pelset, a clerical friend, famed

for his talents and the eloquence with which he displayed them, to receive him into his house as his scholar, Mr. Polset undertaking, "within one seven years, to send him forth no less furnished with arts, languages, and grounds of theoretical divinity, than the carefullest tutor in the strictest college of either university." The scheme, when unfolded to his father, so completely adapted itself to his circumstances and desires, that he speedily took the requisite steps for securing its advantages. "There, and now were all my hopes of my future life upon blasting. The indentures were preparing, the time was set, my suits were addressed for the journey. What was the issue? O God! thy providence made and found it. Thou knowest how heartily and sincerely, in those my young years, I did cast myself upon thy hands; with what faithful resolution I did in this particular occasion resign myself over to thy disposition, earnestly begging of thee, in my fervent prayers, to order all things to the best; and confidently waiting upon thy will for the event. Certainly, never did I in all my life more clearly roll myself upon the Divine Providence than I did in this business, and it succeeded accordingly."

While these measures were in progress, his elder brother had occasion to visit Cambridge, and was kindly entertained by his townsman, Nathaniel Gilby, a Fellow of Emanuel College. The majestic structures, the learned leisure, and the old renown of Cambridge, won this brother "to a great love

and reverence of an academical life," and powerfully enforced Mr. Gilby's earnest persuasions by all means to send his younger brother thither. Under these influences he returned to Ashby, and, with Mr. Gilby's message, reported in the most glowing terms his own impressions. On his knees he begged that his father would not drown the expectations of the youthful aspirant "in a shallow country channel;" and concluded by beseeching him, if the cost were the hindrance, to sell part of the land which should otherwise be his own inheritance. An appeal thus urged could not be resisted, and with an honest enthusiasm the governor of Ashby exclaimed, "Cost what it will, to the university he shall go." The decision was opportunely made, for instantly a knock at the door announced a messenger from Mr. Pelset, to tell that he was waiting for his pupil, and would expect him on the morrow. Mr. Hall told the servant that he was some minutes too late, and, informing him of his change of purpose, dismissed him with a courteous message to his master, whilst Joseph welcomed the change in his destination with tears of joy.

He had spent only two years in Emanuel College, when his father, "whose not very large cistern was to feed many pipes besides his," was prevailed on to recall him, that he might become the master of that school where he had shortly before been scholar. His extreme disappointment at this premature interruption of his studies was so evident

as to move the pity of an uncle, by whose generosity he was enabled to resume his place at college, where he soon after obtained a scholarship. But though other four years terminated his right to this maintenance, they had not abated his literary enthusiasm, and had only exalted into passion his love for the haunts of learning. There was only one capacity in which he could prolong his residence, and from that he was precluded by the statutes. These allowed of only a single fellow from any shire, and the Leicestershire fellowship was pre-occupied by his townsman and tutor, Mr. Gilby. Here, not for the first time, he experienced the blessing of a faithful friend. For in conversation with the Earl of Huntingdon, his class-fellow, Mr. Cholmley, so represented his worth and accomplishments, as to engage in his behalf the warm interest of his father's patron. The Earl was much concerned to hear that his hopes of a fellowship were forestalled; but, on learning the reason, resolved on a remedy. He sent for Mr. Gilby, and offered to make him his chaplain, on terms which gained his ready assent. Mr. Gilby tendered his resignation at Cambridge; it was accepted, and three days of public competition for the vacant fellowship were named. The examination proceeded, and, at the close of the second day, word arrived that the Earl of Huntingdon was dead. Joseph Hall instantly repaired to the Master of the College, and entreated him, in regard for his friend, now thrown destitute

to stay the election. He represented that his own youth less required the situation, and held out better prospects of provision in other ways. But he was told, that the place having been declared vacant, the election must proceed, and that his tutor "must wait upon the providence of God for his disposing elsewhere." "Then was I, with a cheerful unanimity, chosen into that society, which, if it had any equals, I dare say had none beyond it, for good order, studious carriage, strict government, austere piety; in which I spent six or seven years more, with such contentment as the rest of my life hath in vain striven to yield. Now was I called to public disputations often, with no ill success; for never durst I appear in any of those exercises of scholarship till I had, from my knees, looked up to heaven for a blessing, and renewed my actual dependence upon that divine hand. In this while, two years together, I was chosen to the rhetoric lecture in the public schools, when I was encouraged with a sufficient frequency of auditors; but finding that well-applauded work somewhat out of my way, not without a secret blame of myself for so much excursion, I fairly gave up that task, in the midst of those poor acclamations, to a worthy successor, Dr. Dod, and betook myself to those serious studies which might fit me for the high calling whereunto I was destined, wherein, after I had carefully bestowed myself for a time, I took the boldness to enter into sacred orders; the honour whereof having once attained,

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I was no niggard of that talent which God had entrusted to me, preaching often, as occasion was offered, both in country villages abroad, and at home in the most awful auditory of the university."

The rhetoric lecture was not the only avocation of this tranquil period. Mr. Hall then first adventured in the field of authorship; but, either from deference to an ecclesiastical censure, strangely passed upon it, or because he had afterwards learned so completely to count all things but loss for Christ, we do not find him making any subsequent reference to a publication which has procured him applause among many who are ignorant of his nobler works.* It was in his twenty-third year that he gave to the world his Satires, and introduced a species of composition new to British literature. The circumstance of his being the first English satirist would entitle the *Virgidemium* to a place of importance in the history of our national poetry; but the united suffrages of skilful critics—with one formidable exception, and personal animosity made Milton here an incompetent judge—have awarded it other claims. Its greatest fault is obscurity—an obscurity which the learned notes of Warton and

* Warton observes, not with his usual judgment, that "the poet is better known than the prelate or the polemic." So far is this from being the case, that of many thousands who have read Bishop Hall's Meditations and Sermons with pleasure and advantage, few have ever heard that he was a poet, and still fewer that his poems were once proscribed by authority, as unfit to be circulated or read.—*Chalmers' Biog. Dict. Art. Hall.*

Singer have only partially dispelled—the more provoking, as having been purposely assumed by one of the most perspicuous of writers, and not unjustly punished by the comparative neglect to which it has consigned the production. It was Hall's very natural mistake, with no models but the ancient satirists, to consider their style of intricacy and inuendoes essential ; and so completely was he possessed by this misconception, that he thinks it incumbent to apologize for the excessive perspicuity of his verses. But more than the meaning is enigmatical. By clothing the elliptical sententiousness of Persius in the antiquated phraseology of Chaucer, he has locked his sense in a double cipher. In one respect he improved upon his patterns, as his successors have degenerated from him—in the freedom from offensive personalities which distinguishes his Satires—the “biting” and the “toothless” alike. It was his noble determination “to mar his own verse rather than another's name.” The faithful delineation of manners gives us an acquaintance with the times beyond the reach, though not beyond the province of history—whilst the couplets are not loaded with inglorious names, which nothing but such distinction could have saved from forgetfulness. Widely severed as were the peculiarities of Pope—perspicuous, modernized, and personal—we do not wonder that these Satires should have been the subjects of his minute and frequent study when he at last discovered them, and that he should have

expressed regret that "he had not seen them sooner." "Whether we consider the age of the man, or of the world, they appear to be equally wonderful," is the verdict of an accomplished critic.* Nor can we withhold the more specific and discriminating sentence of one, whose large acquaintance with the imagery and diction of his father-poets has made him the too fastidious judge of his own. "In his Satires," says Mr. Campbell, "he discovered not only the early vigour of his own genius, but the powers and pliability of his nature tongue. . . . In the point, and volubility, and vigour of Hall's numbers, we might frequently imagine ourselves perusing Dryden. This may be exemplified in the harmony and picturesqueness of the following description of a magnificent rural mansion, which the traveller approaches in the hopes of reaching the seat of ancient hospitality, but finds it deserted by its selfish owner:—

Beat the broad gates; a goodly hollow sound,
 With double echoes, doth again rebound;
 But not a dog doth bark to welcome thee,
 Nor churlish porter canst thou chafing see.
 All dumb and silent, like the dead of night,
 Or dwelling of some sleepy Sybarite;
 The marble pavement hid with desert weed,
 With house-leek, thistle, dock, and hemlock seed.

* * * * *
 Look to the tow'rd chimneys, which should be
 The wind-pipes of good hospitality,

* Edinburgh Review, vol. xxxi. p. 481.

Through which it breatheth to the open air,
 Betokening life and liberal welfare;
 Lo, there th' unthankful swallow takes her rest,
 And fills the tunnel with her circled nest.

"His Satires are neither cramped by personal hostility, nor spun out to vague declamations on vice, but give us the form and pressure of the times, exhibited in the faults of coeval literature, and in the foppery or sordid traits of prevailing manners. The age was undoubtedly fertile in eccentricity. . . . From the literature of the age, Hall proceeds to its manners and prejudices, and among the latter derides the prevalent confidence in alchemy and astrology. To us this ridicule appears an ordinary effort of reason; but it was in him a common sense above the level of the times."*

To do justice to "the vigorous and musical couplets of this old poet," we must extract the opening passage of the Third Book, which our readers may like none the worse for its entire freedom from obscurity. No classical description of the golden age can surpass the playful ingenuity of the following:—

"Time was, and that was termed the time of gold,
 When world and time were young, that now are old,
 (When quiet Saturn swayed the mace of lead,
 And pride was yet unborn and yet unbred.)
 Time was, that while the autumn fall did last,
 Our hungry sires gaped for the falling mast.

* Campbell's Specimens of the British Poets, vol. II. pp. 257-8.

Could no unhusked acorn leave the tree,
But there was challenge made whose it might be.
But if some nice and licorous appetite
Desired more dainty dish of rare delight,
They scaled the stored crab with bended knee,
Till they had sated their delicious eye:
Or searched the hopeful thicks of hedgy rows,
For briery berries, or haws, or sourer sloes:
Or when they meant to fare the fin'st of all
They licked oak-leaves besprent with honey-fall
As for the thrice three-angled beech nut-shell,
Or chesnut's armed husk and hid kernell,
No squire durst touch, the law would not afford,
Kept for the court, and for the king's own board."

These Satires, though the principal, were not the only poetical effusions of our author. During his college days he complied with a prevailing taste, and composed a multitude of occasional poems, threnodies, and gratulatory odes. From one of the earliest we transcribe a few stanzas, of which the euphonic pomp and well-adjusted expressions may help to reconcile us to an imagery which the long-forgotten occasion has rendered extravagant. The whole elegy on Dr. Whitaker seems to have been penned with ink from Cocytus, and is such as Chatterton, in one of his most dismal moods, would have delighted to imitate:—

"Bind ye my brows with mourning cyparisse,
And palish twigs of deadly poplar tree,
Or if some sadder shades ye can devise,
Those sadder shades veil my light-loathing eye;
I loathe the laurel bands I loved best,
And all that maketh mirth and pleasant rest.

Thou flattering sun that ledst this loathed light,
Why didst thou in thy saffron robes arise?
Or fold'st not up the day in dreary night?
And wak'st the western world's amazed eyes?
And never more rise from the ocean,
To wake the morn, or chase night-shades again.

Hear we no bird of day or dawning morn,
To greet the sun, or glad the waking ear:
Sing out, ye screech-owls, louder than aorn,
And ravens black of night, of death, of drear;
And all ye barking fowls yet never seen,
That fill the moonless night with hideous din."

That we may not return to this subject, in later years Hall employed his muse on a dearer but more arduous theme—a metrical translation of the Psalms. The first ten appeared with the title, "Some few of David's Psalms, metaphrased for a taste of the rest." We could have wished that his success had been more commensurate with his laudable design; but the "Metaphrase" wants the vigour, the pathos, the melody, in short, the poetry of his youthful productions. There have been those who could call forth rich music from a lyre of their own, without being able to retune the harp of David; nor can we wonder that the chords which refused the enchantments of Milton and Byron, should have been silent beneath the touch of Hall.

Having obtained orders, his own inclinations and the rules of the society to which he belonged, made him desirous of some extra-collegiate appointment. At that time a school had recently been opened at

Tiverton in Devon, provided with an ample endowment, and left principally under the patronage of the Lord Chief-Justice Popham. He applied to the master of Emanuel College to recommend a governor for the new erection. Dr. Chaderton without any hesitation nominated Mr. Hall, and immediately carried him to London, that he might introduce him to the Chief-Justice. The illustrious judge was so fascinated by the indications of genius and accomplishments which this interview revealed, that before they parted, the one had promised his influence, and the other signified his readiness to accept. On leaving his lordship, Mr. Hall had not proceeded far when he was accosted by a messenger in the street, who put a letter into his hand. Dr. Chaderton remarking a change in the countenance of his friend as he perused his despatches, asked what the matter might be? Mr. Hall answered by handing him the letter, which contained a very pressing invitation from Lady Drury to the Rectory of Halsted in Suffolk. "Sir," said Mr. Hall, "methinks God pulls me by the sleeve, and tells me it is his will I should rather go to the east than to the west." "Nay," said Dr. Chaderton, "I should rather think that God would have you go westward, for that he hath contrived your engagement before the tender of this letter, which therefore coming too late, may receive a fair and easy answer." "Pardon my dissent," was Mr. Hall's reply; "I well know that divinity was the end whereto I was destined

by my parents, and this I have so constantly proposed to myself, that I never meant other than to pass through this western school to it; but I see that God, who found me ready to go the further way about, now calls me the nearest and directest way to that sacred end." To this the good doctor had nothing farther to oppose, and though it was the frustration of his journey to London, he recognised the finger of God, and joyfully relinquished his protégée to the better care of Providence. All that remained was to satisfy Lord Popham. This Mr. Hall undertook; and not only was his apology as frankly sustained as it was candidly given, but he was enabled to recompense the former kindness of a friend. For, remembering by whose representations to the Earl of Huntingdon he had obtained his fellowship, he stated the qualifications of Mr. Cholmley so effectually, that the vacant place was transferred to him, and they "two, who came together to the University, must now leave it at once." *

His next step in life is too important not to be told, and his own account is too characteristic to admit of any other relating it: "Being now settled in that sweet and civil country of Suffolk, near to St. Edmund's-Bury, my first work was to build up

* From the above narrative, it will be seen that Mr. Campbell has committed an oversight in stating that Hall "was some time master of the school at Tiverton, in Devonshire."—*British Poets*, II. 280. He was never actually appointed.

my house, which was then extremely ruinous; which done, the uncouth solitariness of my life, and the extreme incommodity of that single house-keeping, drew my thoughts, after two years, to condescend to the necessity of a married estate, which God no less strangely provided for me. For, walking from the church on Monday, in the Whitsun-week, with a grave and reverend minister, Mr. Grandidge, I saw a comely modest gentlewoman standing at the door of that house where we were invited to a wedding-dinner; and inquiring of that worthy friend whether he knew her, 'Yes,' quoth he, 'I know her well, and have bespoken her for your wife.' When I further demanded an account of that answer, he told me she was the daughter of a gentleman whom he much respected, Mr. George Winniff of Bretenham; that out of an opinion had of the fitness of that match for me, he had already treated with her father about it, whom he found very apt to entertain it, advising me not to neglect the opportunity; and not concealing the just praises of the modesty, piety, good disposition, and other virtues that were lodged in that seemly presence, I listened to the motion as sent from God, and at last upon due prosecution happily prevailed, enjoying the comfortable society of that meet help for the space of forty-nine years."

The increasing comforts of Halsted Rectory could not hinder him from listening soon after to a proposal made by Sir Edmund Bacon, that he

should accompany him in a continental tour. The amount of enterprise and resources which such an expedition then demanded, can scarcely now be understood. In those days the travelling retinue of a nobleman resembled the Mecca caravan, and he marched under an escort which showed he was taking his pleasure in an enemy's country. Mr. Hall possessed a high degree of that noble curiosity which compels some to labour in the fire for knowledge, whilst others, waiting till wisdom come, are contentedly ignorant. No one in reading his works can fail to be struck with the indications of a busy, quick, and observant eye. Many of his most striking and original remarks are the result of sagaciously noting, and dexterously applying what passes before the eyes of other men too often to appear uncommon, that is, to appear in any way *remarkable*. But the prospect of exploring a field then so seldom traversed dilated his mind with absolute ecstasy, and he rejoiced in the ungathered harvest of knowledge which it promised. Above all, he wished to visit a Roman Catholic country. He longed to behold Popery in reality; not the crippled crouching thing which prolonged a skulking existence in England, but the stalwart, galled, and raging Apollyon that stalked tremendously through Europe. Sir Edmund travelled in the protection of the English ambassador, and for farther concealment, Mr. Hall exchanged his canonicals for the silken robes and gay colours of a fashion-

able English gentleman. And notwithstanding the frequent debates into which his zeal betrayed him amongst Jesuits and friars, the suspicious excellence of his Latin, and the sturdy Protestantism, which only "the hulk of a tall Brabanter" saved from martyrdom at the procession of John the Baptist, he passed undetected from Calais to Brussels, from Nemours to Spa, and then, returning, to Antwerp and Middleburgh. It was our traveller's anxiety to view the ancient college of this last city, which lost him his voyage home. He left his party at Flushing, and lingered so long at Middleburgh, that his friends availed themselves of a favourable wind, and he arrived in time to look after their vessel far at sea. "Sadly returning to Middleburgh, he waited long for an inconvenient and tempestuous passage." In his epistles he has given an account of this expedition, an extract from which will serve the additional purpose of enabling the reader to compare his earlier—more quaint, dense, and cramp—with his later style. His six Decads of Epistles are the first specimens of that familiar and delightful composition since so common in our language. He claims this merit for himself, and we do not know of any British author who published letters of his own before him.

"Besides my hopes, not my desires, I travelled of late; for knowledge partly, and partly for health. There was nothing that made not my journey pleasant, save the labour of the way; which yet was so

sweetly deceived by the society of Sir Edmund Bacon (a gentleman truly honourable, beyond all titles), that I found small cause to complain. The sea brooked not me, nor I it; an unquiet element, made only for wonder and use, not for pleasure. Alighted once from that wooden conveyance, and uneven way, I bethought myself how fondly our life is committed to an unsteady and reeling piece of wood, fickle winds, restless waters, while we may set foot on steadfast and constant earth. Lo, then everything taught me, everything delighted me; so ready are we to be affected with these foreign pleasures, which at home we should overlook. I saw much as one might in such a span of earth in so few months. The time favoured me: for now newly had the key of peace opened those parts which war had before closed; closed (I say) to all English, save either fugitives or captives. All civil occurrences (as what fair cities, what strange fashions, entertainments, dangers, delights, we found) are fit for other ears and winter evenings. What I noted, as a divine, within the sphere of my profession, my paper shall not spare in some part to report.

“Along our way, how many churches saw we demolished! Nothing left but rude heaps, to tell the passenger there hath been both devotion and hostility. Fury hath done that there which covetousness would do with us; would do, but shall not: the truth within shall save the walls without. And, to speak truly (whatever the vulgar exclaim), idola-

try pulled down those walls, not rage. If there had been no Hollander to raze them, they would have fallen alone rather than hide so much impiety under their guilty roof. These are spectacles, not so much of cruelty as justice; cruelty of man, justice of God. But (which I wondered at) churches fall and Jesuits' colleges rise everywhere. There is no city where those are not either rearing or built. Whence cometh this? Is it, for that devotion is not so necessary as policy? Those men (as we say of the fox) fare best where they are most cursed. None so much spited of their own, none so hated of all, none so opposed by ours; and yet these ill weeds grow. Whosoever lives long shall see them feared of their own, who now hate them; shall see these seven lean kine devour all the fat beasts that feed on the meadows of Tiber.

"At Brussels I saw some English women profess themselves vestals, with a thousand rites, I know not whether more ridiculous or magical. Poor souls! they could not be fools enough at home. It would have made you to pity, laugh, disdain (I know not which more), to see by what cunning sleights and fair pretences that weak sex was fetched into a wilful bondage, and (if these two can agree) willingly constrained to serve a master whom they must and cannot obey. What follows hence? Late sorrow, secret mischief, misery irremediable.

"I talked there, in more boldness perhaps than wisdom, with Costerus, a famous Jesuit, an old man,

more testy than subtile, and more able to wrangle than satisfy. Our discourse was long and roving; and on his part full both of words and vehemency. He spake as at home, I as a stranger; yet so as he saw me modestly peremptory. The particulars would swell my letter too much: it is enough that the truth lost less than I gained.

“At Ghent, a city that commands reverence for age, and wonder for the greatness, we fell upon a Capuchin novice, who wept bitterly because he was not allowed to make himself miserable. His head had now felt the razor, his back the rod: all that laconical discipline pleased him well, which another being condemned to, would justly account a torment. What hindered then? Piety to his mother would not permit this which he thought piety to God. He could not be a willing beggar, unless his mother would beg unwillingly. He was the only heir of his father, the only stay of his mother: the comfort of her widowhood depended on this her orphan; who now naked must enter into the world of the Capuchins, as he came first into this, leaving his goods to the division of the fraternity—the least part whereof should have been hers, whose he wished all. Hence those tears. These men for devout, the Jesuits for learned and pragmatical, have engrossed all opinion from other orders. O hypocrisy! No Capuchin may take or touch silver. This metal is as very an anathema to them, as the wedge of gold to Achan; at the offer whereof he starts back, as

Moses from the serpent: yet he carries a boy with him, that takes and carries it, and never complains of either metal or measure. I saw and laughed at it, and by this open trick of hypocrisy suspected more, more close.

“At Nemours, on a pleasant and steep hill-top, we found one that was termed a married hermit, approving his wisdom above his fellows, that could make choice of so cheerful and sociable a solitariness. Whence, after a delightful passage up the sweet river *Mosa*, we visited the populous and rich city of *Leodium* (Liege). I would those streets were more moist with wine than with blood: wherein no day, no night, is not dismal to some. No law, no magistrate, lays hold on the known murderer, if himself list; for, three days after this fact, the gates are open and justice shut; private violence may pursue him, public justice cannot; whence some of more hot temper carve themselves revenge; others take up with a small pecuniary satisfaction. O, England, thought I, happy for iustice, happy for security! There you shall find in every corner a maumet (image); at every door a beggar, in every dish a priest. From thence we passed to the Spa, a village famous for her medicinal and mineral waters, compounded of iron and copperas, the virtue whereof yet the simple inhabitant ascribes to their beneficial saint, whose heavy foot hath made an ill-shaped impression in a stone of the upper

well—a water more wholesome than pleasant, and yet more famous than wholesome.

“One thing I may not omit without sinful oversight ;—a short but memorable story which the graphier of that town (though of different religion) reported to more ears than ours. When the last inquisition tyrannized in those parts, and helped to spend the faggots of Ardenne, one of the rest, a confident confessor, being led far to his stake, sung psalms along the way in a heavenly courage and victorious triumph. The cruel officer, envying his last mirth, and grieving to see him merrier than his tormentors, commanded him silence. He sings, still as desirous to improve his last breath to the best. The view of his approaching glory bred his joy—his joy breaks forth into a cheerful confession. The enraged sheriff causes his tongue to be cut off near the roots. Bloody wretch ! it had been good music to have heard his shrieks, but to hear his music was torment. The poor martyr dies in silence, rests in peace. Not many months after, our butcherly officer hath a son born with his tongue hanging down upon his chin, like a deer after a long chase, which never could be gathered up within the bounds of his lips. O the divine hand ! full of justice, full of revenge.

“Let me tell you yet, ere I take off my pen, two wonders more, which I saw in that wonder of cities, Antwerp ;—onc a solemn mass in a shambles, and that on God’s day, while the house was full of

meat, of butchers, of buyers—some kneeling, others bargaining, most talking, all busy. It was strange to see one house sacred to God and the belly, and how these two services agreed. The priests did eat flesh, the butchers sold flesh, in one roof at one instant. The butcher killed and sold it by pieces; the priest did sacrifice, and orally devour it whole.* The other, an Englishman, so madly devout that he had wilfully housed up himself as an anchorite, the worst of all prisoners. There sat he, pent up for his farther merit, half hunger-starved for the charity of the citizens. It was worth seeing how manly he could bite in his secret want, and dissemble his over-late repentance. I cannot commend his mortification, if he wish to be in heaven, yea, in purgatory, to be delivered from thence. I durst not pity him, because his durance was willing, and, as he hoped, meritorious; but such encouragement as he had from me, such thank shall he have from God, who, instead of an *Euge*, which he looks for, shall angrily challenge him with ‘Who required this!’”

The interview with Father Costerus, to which Mr. Hall alludes in the foregoing letter, has been recorded elsewhere, and is characteristic of the times. It often happens that the prevailing notions of the day supply arguments for some great truth,

* We need scarcely say that the author alludes to that monstrous tenet of Popery, transubstantiation.

to which controversialists resort more eagerly, and on which they are disposed to lay greater stress than on those proofs which are alike weighty and conclusive in every age. It has been said that Baxter, in his book on the Immortality of the Soul, perplexed the sceptics of his time by a reference to ghosts and apparitions more than by all his other reasonings; and if they were so inconsistent in their credulity, we can scarcely conceive anything fairer or more irresistible as an *argumentum ad homines*, however inefficacious it may be in the altered belief of the present generation. It was similar ground which our Protestant divine occupied in common with his Popish antagonist, without any suspicion of its soundness. An English barrister, a proselyte to Popery, and resident at Brussels, was narrating to Sir Edmund Bacon, in a style of extravagant hyperbole, the wonders lately performed by our Lady at Zichem; and to silence the shrewd objections of the worthy knight, had instanced a cure miraculously wrought upon himself. At this moment Mr. Hall entered the apartment, and there being nothing in his dress to indicate his profession, joined freely in the conversation. "Put case this report of yours be granted for true, I beseech you teach me what difference there is betwixt these miracles and those which were wrought by Vespasian, by some vestals with charms and spells; the rather that I have noted in the late published report some patient prescribed to come upon a Fri-

day, and some to wash in such a well before their approach, and divers other such charm-like operations?" The confident tone of the lawyer was suddenly lowered by this unexpected interrogatory, and he excused himself from a reply, saying, "I do not profess this kind of scholarship; but we have in the city many famous divines, with whom if it would please you to confer, you might sooner receive satisfaction." Mr. Hall asked who was considered the most eminent divine of the place. The English gentleman named Father Costerus, and undertook to secure him a conference, to which Mr. Hall gladly acceded. Accordingly, in the afternoon the zealous Romanist returned to announce that the father had agreed to the conference, and to accompany him to the Jesuits' College. There arrived, the porter opened the gate, and ejaculating a *Deo gratias*, admitted the stranger. He did not remain long in the hall till Costerus joined him. After a friendly salutation, the priest ran on in a long and formal oration on the unity of that church in which only men can be saved, when Mr. Hall took advantage of the first moment which civility allowed to interrupt him: "Sir, I beseech you, mistake me not. My nation tells you of what religion I am. I come not hither out of any doubt of my professed belief, or any purpose to change it; but moving a question to this gentleman concerning the pretended miracles of the time, he pleased to refer me to yourself for my answer; which motion

of his I was the more willing to embrace, for the fame that I have heard of your learning and worth. And if you can give me satisfaction herein, I am ready to receive it." So, seating themselves at a table in the end of the hall, they prepared for a vigorous encounter. The Jesuit commenced by giving his view of the distinction between miracles diabolical and divine. This did not satisfy Mr. Hall, and he stated his objections. Upon this his opponent diverged into a vehement assault on the English Church, which he protested could not yield one miracle. Mr. Hall reclaimed, that in his church they had manifest proofs of the ejection of devils by fasting and prayer. "If it can be proved," cried Costerus, "that ever any devil was dispossessed in your church, I shall quit my religion." In the long and keen debate which followed, Mr. Hall started many questions to which his antagonist could give no satisfactory answers. They soon obtained an additional auditor in Father Baldwin, an English Jesuit, who came in and seated himself on a form at the other end of the table, and seemed not a little mortified that a gentleman of his nation should leave the college as unenlightened as he came. The next morning the persevering lawyer arrived with a message from his father, expressing his disappointment that an Englishman should have preferred a conference with a foreigner, when he would have been happy to have his acquaintance, and to give him satisfaction. Mr. Hall would as willingly have

made arrangements for this interview as for the former, had not a secret signal from Sir Edmund reminded him that they came to travel, not to argue, and that their safe conduct would not be strengthened by an additional debate. Father Baldwin's message was therefore politely declined, Mr. Hall having no hope of converting the priest, and being resolved that no Papist should alter him.

It may be worth while to mention, as justifying an objection to the English ritual strongly urged by the Presbyterians of that day, that in his voyage up the Maese, Mr. Hall had what he calls "a dangerous conflict" with a Sorbonist of the Carmelite order, on the subject of the Eucharist. This friar was trying to persuade the company, from the circumstance of their kneeling at the sacrament, that the English Protestants recognised the doctrine of transubstantiation. By what arguments Mr. Hall confuted the calumny we do not know; but the debate waxed so hot, that Sir Edmund was constrained to interfere, and call away his polemical friend from a discussion more manly than discreet, in a country where all argument against the established religion was prohibited by law:—not, however, till the prior indicated his suspicions to the bystanders, by significantly telling them that he had once prepared a suit of green satin for his travels in England. Mr. Hall was afterwards employed by his Majesty King James, to persuade the people of Scotland into kneeling at the communion. It does not appear

that he executed his commission with great alacrity; and when he found his church claimed by Roman Catholics on the ground of this ceremony, he might well have shown indulgence for those Presbyterians who saw in it a remnant of Popery.

At Spa he composed the second of his three centuries of "Meditations and Vows." We know what lofty musings have arisen in poetic minds in the forests and by the "waves" of Ardenne; but the thoughts of our traveller took their rise in heaven. As the productions of an able pen, these meditations reflect lustre on the talents of their author, and give him as good a claim to be styled, as he has often been, the Christian Seneca, as a Latin father to be called the Christian Cicero. Each embodies some brief reflection, and closes with a practical resolution: in this last respect reminding us of perhaps the most instructive document in the life of that wise self-observer, President Edwards. They are precious, as revealing thoughts which had long dwelt in a sanctified bosom, as recording the animadversions of one who was no less sagacious in reading the hearts of others than strict in watching his own, and as contributing wise directions to others advancing in the same heavenward journey. No reader need grudge a few extracts, should they bring him acquainted with a work never to be forgotten, but perhaps not sufficiently known in practical divinity:—

"As there is a foolish wisdom, so there is a wise

ignorance, in not prying into God's ark, in not inquiring into things not revealed. I would fain know all that I need, and all that I may. I leave God's secrets to himself. It is happy for me that God makes me of his court, though not of his council."

"The devil himself devised that slander of early holiness, *A young saint, an old devil*. Sometimes young devils have proved old saints, never the contrary; but true saints in youth do always form angels in their age. I will strive to be ever good; but if I should not find myself best at last, I should fear I was never good at all."

"As we say, There would be no thieves if there were no receivers; so would there not be so many open mouths to detract and slander if there were not so many open ears to entertain them. If I cannot stop another man's mouth from speaking ill, I will either open my mouth to reprove it, or else I will stop mine ears from hearing it, and let him see in my face that he hath no room in my heart."

"I am a stranger even at home; therefore, if the dogs of the world bark at me, I neither care nor wonder."

"I care not for any companion but such as may teach me somewhat, or learn somewhat of me; but these shall much pleasure me, neither know I whether more. For though it be an excellent thing to learn, I learn but to teach others."

"If I die, the world shall miss me but a little—I

shall miss it less. Not it me—because it hath such store of better men; not I it—because it hath so much ill, and I shall have so much happiness.”

“I acknowledge no Master of Requests in heaven but one—Christ my mediator. I know I cannot be so happy as not to need him, nor so miserable that he should condemn me. Good prayers never come weeping home; I am sure I shall either receive what I ask, or what I should ask.”

“I never loved those salamanders that are never well but when they are in the fire of contention. I will rather suffer a thousand wrongs than offer one. I will suffer a hundred rather than return one. I will suffer many ere I complain of one, and endeavour to right it by contending. I have ever found that to strive with my superior is furious; with my equal, doubtful; with my inferior, sordid and base; with any, full of unquietness.”

“Sudden extremity is a notable trial of faith. The faithful, more quickly than any casualty, can lift up his heart to his stay in heaven, whereas the worldling stands amazed and distraught with the evil, because he hath no refuge to fly unto. When, therefore, some sudden stitch girds me in the side, like to be the messenger of death, or when the sword of my enemy, in an unexpected assault, threatens my body, I will seriously note how I am affected: so the suddenest evil, as it shall not come unlooked for, shall not go away unthought of. If I find myself courageous and heavenly-minded, I will

rejoice in the truth of God's grace in me, knowing that one drachm of tried faith is worth a whole pound of speculative, and that which once stood by me will never fail me. If dejected and heartless, herein I will acknowledge cause of humiliation, and with all care and diligence seek to store myself against the danger following."

"I will be ever doing something, that either God when he cometh, or Satan when he tempteth, may find me busied."

"Each day is a new life, and an abridgment of the whole. I will so live as if I counted every day my first and my last—as if I began to live but then, and should live no more afterwards."

"Rareness causes wonder. If the sun should arise but once on the earth, I doubt every man would be a Persian, and fall down and worship him."

"The proud man hath no God; the envious man hath no neighbour; the angry man hath not himself."

"I observe three seasons wherein a wise man differs not from a fool: in his infancy, in sleep, and in silence; for in the two former we are all fools, and in silence all are wise. Surely he is not a fool that hath unwise thoughts, but he that utters them. Even concealed folly is wisdom, and sometimes wisdom uttered is folly. While others care how to speak, my care shall be how to hold my peace."

"Extremity distinguisheth friends. Worldly pleasures, like physicians, give us over when once we lie a-dying; and yet the deathbed had most need

of comforts. Christ Jesus standeth by his in the pangs of death, and after death at the bar of judgment, not leaving them either in their bed or in their grave."

The living at Halsted was small, and, notwithstanding the moderate desires of the incumbent, so inadequate, that he was forced "to write books to buy books." He applied to the patron for an augmentation of ten pounds *per annum*—a demand in itself not exorbitant, and only just, when it is remembered that Sir Robert Drury, by an abuse of power then frequent, was appropriating to his own uses a portion of the minister's emoluments. Sir Robert's refusal to comply with Mr. Hall's request, prepared him to accept any preferment that might be offered him. And he soon had more than he desired. For during a visit to London he was sought out by a friend, who came to tell him the high acceptance which his *Meditations* had obtained at the court of Prince Henry, and to urge him to embrace an opportunity of preaching before his highness. Mr. Hall was then confined to his lodgings in Drury Lane by a severe cold. "I strongly pleaded my indisposition of body, and my inpreparation for any such work, together with my bashful fears, and utter unfitness for such a presence. My averseness doubled his importunity; in fine, he left me not till he had my engagement to preach the Sunday following at Richmond. He made way for me to that awful pulpit, and encouraged me by the favour of

his noble lord the Earl of Essex. I preached: through the favour of my God, that sermon was not so well given as taken; insomuch as that sweet prince signified his desire to hear me again the Tuesday following; which done, that labour gave more contentment than the former, so as that prince both gave me his hand, and commanded me to his service. My patron seeing me, upon my return to London, looked after by some great persons, began to wish me at home, and told me that some or other would be snatching me up. I answered it was in his power to prevent: would he be pleased to make my maintenance but so competent as in right it should be, I would never stir from him. Instead of condescending, it pleased him to fall into an expostulation of the rate of competencies, affirming the variableness thereof according to our own estimation, and our either raising or moderating the causes of our expenses. I showed him the insufficiency of my means; but a harsh and displeasing answer so disheartened me, that I resolved to embrace the first opportunity of my remove.

"Now, whilst I was taken up with these anxious thoughts, a messenger came to me from my Lord Denny, my after most honourable patron, entreating me from his lordship to speak with him. No sooner came I thither, than, after a glad and noble welcome, I was entertained with the earnest offer of Waltham. The conditions were, like the mover of them, free and bountiful. I received them as

from the munificent hand of my God ; and returned full of the cheerful acknowledgments of a gracious providence over me. Too late now did my former noble patron relent, and offer me those terms which had before fastened me for ever. I returned home happy in a new master, and in a new patron, betwixt whom I divided myself and my labours, with much comfort, and no less acceptance.

“ In the second year of mine attendance on his highness, when I came for my dismissal from that monthly service, it pleased the prince to command me a longer stay ; and at last upon mine allowed departure, by the mouth of Sir Thomas Challoner, his governor, to tender unto me a motion of more honour and favour than I was worthy of ; which was, that it was his highness’ pleasure and purpose to have me continually resident at the court as a constant attendant, whilst the rest held on their wonted vicissitudes ; for which purpose his highness would obtain for me such preferments as should yield me full contentment. I returned my humblest thanks, and my readiness to sacrifice myself to the service of so gracious a master ; but being conscious to myself of my unanswerableness to so great expectation, and loath to forsake so dear and noble a patron, who had placed much of his heart upon me, I did modestly put it off, and held close to my Waltham ; where, in a constant course, I preached a long time (as I had done also at Halsted before) thrice in the week ; yet never durst I

climb into the pulpit to preach any sermon, whereof I had not before, in my poor and plain fashion, penned every word in the same order wherein I hoped to deliver it, although in the expression I listed not to be a slave to syllables."

His attendance at court did not long detain him from the undivided performance of his pastoral duties at Waltham; for the hopes of the nation were quickly prostrated by the death of the amiable prince, which occurred Nov. 6, 1612; and on the first day of the following year, Mr. Hall discharged the last office of a love which had supplanted the deference of the courtier, by preaching a farewell sermon to the prince's household, then dissolved at St. James's. The discourse contains repeated testimonies of the grateful and affectionate admiration with which the chaplain cherished the memory of his illustrious patron—testimonies which royal station has seldom so justly merited. But history has recorded the engaging character of King James's eldest son so fully, as to supersede any extracts from this ardent eulogy. The closing sentences, however, possess a pathos and an appropriateness to the text (Rev. xxi. 3) which will justify their insertion here:—"But what if we shall meet here no more? what if we shall no more see one another's face? Brethren, we shall once meet together above; we shall once see the glorious face of God, and never look off again. Let it not overgrieve us to leave these tabernacles of stone, since

we must shortly lay down these tabernacles of clay, and enter into tabernacles not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Till then, farewell, my dear brethren, farewell in the Lord. Go in peace, and live as those that have lost such a master, and as those that serve a Master whom they cannot lose. And the God of peace go with you, and prosper you in all your ways, and so fix this tabernacle in you upon earth, that you may be received into those tabernacles of the New Jerusalem, and dwell with him for ever in that glory which he hath provided for all that love him. Amen."

The sixteen years which Mr. Hall spent at Waltham were among the most pleasant of his life, for they were the least distracted. His circumstances freed him from worldly solicitudes; the national convulsions which agitated his old age, of which he was sometimes the sorrowful witness, and sometimes the unoffending victim, had not commenced; his home was the shining abode of that happiness a beam of which occasionally brightens upon his pages; and in that home no apartment was more loved or frequented than his study. What Hall has already described, no other should attempt to tell. and we do not believe that any reader ever complained of the length of the following letter, which gives in brief the distribution of this good man's time for many years together. It will possess an additional value to those whose distinguished prerogative has placed them in situations of like advantage :—

"Every day is a little life, and our whole life is but a day repeated ; whence it is that old Jacob numbered his life by days, and Moses desired to be taught this point of holy arithmetic, to number not his years, but his days. Those, therefore, that dare lose a day are dangerously prodigal, those that dare misspend it desperate. All days are his who gave time a beginning and continuance ; yet some he hath made ours, not to command, but to use. In none may we forget him, in some we must forget all besides him. First, therefore, I desire to awake at those hours, not when I will, but when I must ; pleasure is not a fit rule for rest, but health ; neither do I consult so much with the sun as with mine own necessity, whether of body or in that of the mind. If this vassal could well serve me waking, it should never sleep ; but now it must be pleased, that it may be serviceable. Now, when sleep is rather driven away than leaves me, I would ever awake with God ; my first thoughts are for Him who hath made the night for rest, and the day for travail ; and as he gives, so blesses both. If my heart be early seasoned with his presence, it will savour of him all day after. While my body is dressing, not with an effeminate curiosity, nor yet with rude neglect, my mind addresses itself to her ensuing task, bethinking what is to be done, and in what order, and marshalling, as it may, my hours with my work. That done, after some while's meditation, I walk up to my masters and companions,

my books; and sitting down amongst them with the best contentment, I dare not reach forth my hand to salute any of them till I have first looked up to heaven, and craved favour of Him to whom all my studies are duly referred, without whom I can neither profit nor labour. After this, out of no great variety, I call forth those which may best fit my occasions, wherein I am not too scrupulous of age. Sometimes I put myself to school to one of those ancients whom the Church hath honoured with the name of Fathers, whose volumes I confess not to open without a secret reverence of their incliness and gravity; sometimes to those later doctors, who want nothing but age to make them classical; always to God's book. That day is lost, whereof some hours are not improved in those divine monuments; others I turn over out of choice, these out of duty. Ere I can have sate unto weariness, my family, having now overcome all household distractions, invite me to our common devotions; not without some short preparation. These, heartily performed, send me up with a more strong and cheerful appetite to my former work, which I find made easy to me by intermission and variety. Now, therefore, can I deceive the hours with change of pleasures, that is, of labours. One while my eyes are busied, another while my hand, and sometimes my mind takes the burden from them both. One hour is spent in textual divinity, another in controversy; histories relieve them both. Now, when my mind is weary

of others' labours, it begins to undertake its own: sometimes it meditates, and winds up for future use; sometimes it lays forth its conceits into present discourse, sometimes for itself, often for others. Neither know I whether it works or plays in these thoughts; I am sure no sport hath more pleasure, no work more use. Only the decay of a weak body makes me think these delights insensibly laborious. Thus could I all day (as ringers use) make myself music with changes, were it not that this faint monitor interrupts me still in the midst of my busy pleasures, and enforces me both to respite and repast. I must yield to both; while my body and mind are joined together in these unequal couples, the better must follow the weaker. Before my meals, therefore, and after, I let myself loose from all thoughts, and now would forget that I ever studied. A full mind takes away the body's appetite, no less than a full body makes a dull and unwieldy mind. Company, discourse, recreations, are now seasonable and welcome. These prepare me for a diet, not gluttonous, but medicinal. The palate may not be pleased, but the stomach, nor that for its own sake; neither would I think any of these comforts worth respect in themselves, but in their use, in their end, so far as they may enable me to better things. If I see any dish to tempt my palate, I fear a serpent in that apple, and would please myself by a wilful denial. I rise capable of more, not desirous; not now immediately from my

trencher to my book, but after some intermission. Moderate speed is a sure help to all proceedings, where those things which are prosecuted with violence of endeavour or desire, either succeed not, or continue not.

“After my later meal, my thoughts are slight: only my memory may be charged with her task of recalling what was committed to her custody in the day; and my heart is busy in examining my hands and mouth, and all other senses, of that day’s behaviour. And now the evening is come, no tradesman doth more carefully take in his wares, clear his shop-board, and shut his windows, than I would shut up my thoughts and clear my mind. That student shall live miserably, who, like a camel, lies down under his burden. All this done, calling together my family, we end the day with God. How miserable is the condition of those men who spend the time as if it were given them and not lent! as if hours were waste creatures, and such as should never be accounted for! as if God would take this for a good bill of reckoning, *Item*, spent upon my pleasures, forty years.

“Such are my common days; but God’s day calls for another respect. The same sun arises on this day, and enlightens it; yet, because the Sun of righteousness arose upon it, and gave a new life to the world in it, and drew the strength of God’s moral precept unto it; therefore justly do we sing with the Psalmist, ‘This is the day which the Lord

hath made.' Now I forget the world, and in a sort myself; and deal with my wonted thoughts, as great men use, who at some times of their privacy forbid the access of all suitors. Prayer, meditation, reading, hearing, preaching, singing, good conference, are the business of this day, which I dare not bestow on any work or pleasure but heavenly. I hate superstition on the one side, and looseness on the other; but I find it hard to offend in too much devotion, easy in profaneness. The whole week is sanctified by this day; and according to my care of this day, is my blessing on the rest."

So intent was he on these beloved employments, that, to secure leisure for study, he is said* to have restricted himself at one time to a single meal in the day. He was not a solitary instance of the like abstinence among his contemporaries. But that he was not criminally negligent of his health, may be inferred from various circumstances. He wisely imitated Isaac, "who went out in the evening to meditate."† And not only did he from time to time indulge himself with "his other soul," music, but like many other worthies formed for patient contemplation, he occasionally took down the angle, and by the river side pursued the calming symbolical of his own. To the remonstrances of a considerate friend he answers—"Fear not my immo-

* Lloyd's Memoirs, p. 418.

† Art of Divine Meditation, Chap. X.

derate studies. I have a body that controls me enough in these courses; my friends need not. There is nothing whereof I could sooner surfeit, if I durst neglect my body to satisfy my mind; but while I affect knowledge, my weakness checks me, and says, 'Better a little learning than no health.' I yield, and patiently abide myself debarred of my chosen felicity."

The quiet tenor of his life at Waltham was thrice interrupted by a call from his Majesty, to bear a part in undertakings of public interest. The first was in 1616, when he went to France to grace the splendid retinue of the British Ambassador, Viscount Doncaster. Had the festivities of that brilliant occasion possessed any attractions for our sober-minded theologian, he was effectually precluded from enjoying them by a dangerous sickness, which overtook him soon after his arrival, and lasted with his stay. When the time arrived for the return of the ambassador, he was kindly invited by the illustrious Du Moulin to reside with him till his recovery should be established. "I thanked him," says Dr. Hall, "but resolved if I could but creep homewards to put myself upon the journey. A litter was provided, but of so little ease, that Simeon's penitential lodging, or a malefactor's stocks, had been less penal. I crawled down from my close chamber into that carriage, 'in which you seemed to me to be conveyed as in a coffin,'* as

* In qua videbaris mihi efferri, tanquam in sandapilla.

Mr. Moulin wrote to me afterward; that misery had I endured in all the long passage from Paris to Dieppe, being left alone to the surly muleteers; had not the providence of my good God brought me to St. German's, upon the very setting out of those coaches which had stayed there upon that morning's entertainment of my lord ambassador. How glad was I that I might change my seat and my company. In the way, beyond all expectation, I began to gather some strength; whether the fresh air or the desires of my home revived me, so much and so sudden reparation ensued, as was sensible to myself, and seemed strange to others. Being shipped at Dieppe, the sea used us hardly, and after a night and a great part of the day following, sent us back well wind-beaten, to that bleak haven whence we set forth, forcing us to a more pleasing land-passage, through the coasts of Normandy and Picardy; towards the end whereof my former complaint returned upon me, and landing with me, accompanied me to, and at my long desired home." On his return, he found that, during his absence, the king had conferred upon him the deanery of Worcester.

Early in the following year he was called to accompany his Majesty on his famous expedition into Scotland, for the purpose of establishing Episcopacy.† It was James's fortune to have at his com-

† For an account of his Majesty's doings on this occasion, see Calderwood's History, pp. 673 *et seq.*

mand men whose consciences acquiesced in, whose talents vindicated, and whose worth commended the measures which his vanity suggested, and his obstinacy enforced. The ceremonies, afterwards obnoxiously distinguished as the Five Articles of Perth, were the main cause of the royal pedant's progress into Scotland on this occasion. He did one thing wisely when he took in his train an Episcopalian so sincere, so learned, and so reasonable as Dr. Hall. His words had more persuasiveness than his master's ordinances; and though we do not know that he came any speed, the meekness and earnestness with which he argued the question, were better fitted to overcome the Presbyterian prejudices of Scotchmen, than the domineering arrogance of one whose arguments owed all their weight to his station. He respected the Presbyterian ministers, and they recompensed his good opinion with their cordial esteem. His more imperious and less logical brethren envied and misrepresented his reputation. As he says himself, "The great love and respect that I found, both from the ministers and people, brought me no small envy from some of our own. Upon a commonly received supposition, that his Majesty would have no further use of his chaplains, after his remove from Edinburgh (forasmuch as the divines of the country, whereof there is great store and worthy choice, were allotted to every station), I easily obtained, through the solicitation of my ever-honoured

Lord of Carlisle, to return with him before my fellows. No sooner was I gone, than suggestions were made to his Majesty of my over plausible demeanour and doctrine to that already prejudicate people, for which his Majesty, after a gracious acknowledgment of my good service then done, called me upon his return to a favourable and mild account; not more freely professing what informations had been given against me, than his own full satisfaction with my sincere and just answer; as whose excellent wisdom well saw, that such winning carriage of mine could be no hindrance to those his great designs. At the same time, his Majesty, having secret notice that a letter was coming to me from Mr. W. Struthers, a reverend and learned divine of Edinburgh, concerning the five points then proposed and urged to the Church of Scotland, was pleased to impose upon me an earnest charge, to give him a full answer in satisfaction to those his modest doubts; and at large to declare my judgment concerning these required observations, which I speedily performed with so great approbation of his Majesty, that it pleased him to command a transcript thereof, as I was informed, publicly to be read in their most famous university; the effect whereof his Majesty vouchsafed to signify afterwards unto some of my best friends, with allowance beyond my hopes."

In 1618, the Synod of Dort assembled to pronounce a judgment on the controversies introduced

by the new sect of Arminians.* As they desired the attendance of divines from the various reformed churches, Dr. Hall was one of four deputed to represent the Church of England. But he had not attended two months, when the deleterious influence of a Dutch atmosphere, and the sleepless nights of a garrison town, reduced his delicate frame to such a state of weakness that he became unfit to give his presence regularly, and came to the reluctant conclusion that he must withdraw. Before setting out, he complied with a request of the Synod, and preached before them a sermon in Latin, which he was enabled to do with unexpected vigour, having enjoyed during the previous night his first sound rest after a wakeful fortnight. At first he only retired to the Hague, in the hope that a change of place, and the attentions which he received in the house of the ambassador, might recruit his exhausted strength; but experiencing no salutary result, he accepted his Majesty's recall. "Returning by Dort, I sent in my sad farewell to that grave assembly, who by common vote sent to me the president of the Synod, and the assistants, with a respectful and gracious valediction. Neither did the deputies of my Lords the states neglect to visit

* A full account of this famous Synod will be found in Hales's *Golden Remains*, and in Brandt's *History of the Reformation in the Low Countries*. But perhaps there is none better than the *Articles of the Synod*, with a historical preface, translated by the late Mr. Scott of Aston-Sandford.

me; and after a noble acknowledgment of more good service from me than I durst own, dismissed me with an honourable retribution, and sent after me a rich medal of gold, the portraiture of the Synod, for a precious monument of their respects to my poor endeavours, who failed not, whilst I was at the Hague, to impart unto them my poor advice concerning the proceeding of that synodical meeting. The difficulties of my return in such weakness were many and great; wherein, if ever, God manifested his special providence to me, in overruling the cross accidents of that passage, and, after many dangers and despairs, contriving my safe arrival." The gold medal was transmitted to him from the States, through the eminent scholar Daniel Heinsius, and from all the gratifying circumstances attending its presentation, was a memorial which he justly valued. It is conspicuously introduced in his portrait preserved in Emanuel College. Dr. Hall had never occasion to be ashamed of his connection with the venerable Synod of Dort, notwithstanding the aspersions heaped upon it as soon as its sittings had terminated, and propagated to the present day. Amongst other calumnies, his colleagues were accused of a conspiracy against the Arminians, and of having taken an oath beforehand to vote down the remonstrants. The slander might have refuted itself; but Dr. Hall published a letter which effectually dispelled it, and we are not aware that this falsehood has ever been revived.

The errors which this Synod condemned, but did not cure, soon crossed the German Ocean, to divide the churches of Britain. "Sides were taken, and pulpits rang everywhere of these opinions." The pacific spirit of this holy man was wounded, when he heard the watchwords of Arminian controversy passed as freely and angrily in England as they had ever been in Holland. When the convocation of the Church met in 1623, Dr. Hall preached a sermon in Latin before it, of which an English translation by his son is preserved among his other works. Its tone is as conciliatory as might have been anticipated from the known tendencies of the author, and its very title is nobly indicative of his designs and feelings: "Noah's dove bringing an olive of peace to the tossed ark of Christ's Church." He laboured in other ways to restore the unity of which he mourned the departure; and published, as "a project of pacification," some remarks "on the five busy articles, commonly known by the name of Arminius." In this his mediatory interference met with no better reward than did that of Richard Baxter in a similar controversy a short time after; for it brought upon him the suspicions of many and the open hostility of some in either party. As he calmly remarks, "I was scorched a little with this flame, which I desired to quench."

Hitherto Dr. Hall had sustained the lighter responsibilities and easier labours of a parish priest. When he had ventured in controversy, no other

necessity was laid upon him than the love which he bore to truth, and concern at beholding the best cause the worse supported. He had enjoyed frequent, if not long, intervals of that contemplative lesiure after which his soul habitually thirsted. He was now called to govern a church where his ambition had only been to serve; but the period of his elevation was one when the office of a bishop was least likely to be courted. His episcopate extended over the most tempestuous period which the English hierarchy has encountered. The vessel was heaving when he was summoned to his post; and the billow which bore him to the shore was that which swept over the wreck.

It was in 1627 that Dr. Hall was consecrated Bishop of Exeter. He had previously declined the see of Gloucester. He entered on this high station aware of the suspicions from many quarters which attended him; "for some that sate at the stern of the Church had him in great jealousy for too much favour of Puritanism." He had early intelligence that certain persons were set as spies to watch over him. However, he formed his resolution, and walked wisely according to its rule. In his diocese he found some who did not comply with the ecclesiastical canons; but by his prudent and gainly conduct he reclaimed all the refractory, except two who retired from his jurisdiction. What greatly tended to secure harmony within his extensive charge, was the honourable determination which he formed at the

outset, and to which he steadily adhered, of never imposing any new orders or rites on his clergy. This, with the full toleration of week-day lectures and extra-canonical services, and the favourable notice which he took of the more diligent among the clergy, secured for his diocese an invidious pre-eminence over those around it, and brought on him the resentment of his more narrow-minded brethren on the bench, as well as the hostility of the less exemplary within his own cure. At court he was informed against, and "was three several times upon his knees to his Majesty, to answer these great criminations;" insomuch that he "plainly told the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, that rather than he would be obnoxious to these slanderous tongues of his misinformers, he would cast up his rochet." The unanimity and attachment of his clergy were his sufficient compensation for the obloquy which others so unworthily cast upon him. But a doubtful oath imposed in 1640,* and which this conscientious prelate could not tender to his clergy, gave rise to dissensions, through the officious interposition of some strangers. The majority still adhered to him; but, the firebrands being now scattered, he foresaw a conflagration. In this conjuncture he was the more ready to accept the offer of a translation to Norwich, made to him in the year following (1641), by King Charles. With his promotion

* The synodical or *et cetera* oath.

to this see he closes his *Specialties*. "But how I took the Tower in my way; and how I have been dealt with since my repair hither, I could be lavish in the sad report, ever desiring my good God to enlarge my heart in thankfulness to him, for the sensible experience I have had of his fatherly hand over me, in the deepest of all my afflictions, and to strengthen me for whatsoever other trials he shall be pleased to call me unto; that being found faithful unto the death, I may obtain that crown of life which he has ordained for all those that overcome."

The value of Bishop Hall's services, and the perils of his situation, will be better understood when it is remembered that Laud was at this time the primate of England. Among the other inflictions of that arbitrary and unprincipled prelate, was the famous "Book of Spirits." This he revived, and required that it should be read from every pulpit in England. Those who resisted were silenced for their Puritanism; but the piety and independence of Hall rescued the clergy of his diocese. And although the archbishop, in the plenitude of his zeal against evangelical religion, had summoned before the Star Chamber some pious individuals, who had founded lectureships and purchased impropriations for the supply of destitute parishes, and compelled them, at a prodigious sacrifice, to relinquish their scheme, Bishop Hall had the intrepidity to protect within his bounds the obnoxious lecturers.

His moderation, however, did not save him from

the storm which at this time burst after long threatening, and carried the episcopal order before it. The circumstance which implicated him was, at the worst, an act of unadvisedness. When the Parliament met towards the close of 1641, the popular indignation against the bishops had risen so high, that the House of Lords was beset by an armed mob of many thousands, who, by the cry of "No bishops!" gave unequivocal indications of their object. Such of the order as happened to be present, including the Archbishop of York and the subject of this memoir, felt that their lives were in jeopardy, and escaped with difficulty to their homes—some under the protection of the Earl of Manchester, others by secret and circuitous routes, and the rest by remaining till the night was far advanced. Having been so narrowly rescued, the bishops felt no inclination to expose themselves again to similar danger, and were induced to sign a document prepared by the Archbishop of York, petitioning the King and Parliament to guarantee their safety in attending on their legislative duties, and protesting against all enactments which might pass during their absence. This protest was instantly laid hold of by their enemies as a most unconstitutional and treasonable declaration, and made the ground of an impeachment against the twelve who had signed it. "We poor souls," says Hall, "who little thought that we had done anything that might deserve a chiding, are now called to our knees at the bar, and charged

severally with high treason, being not a little astonished at the suddenness of this crimination, compared with the perfect innocency of our own intentions. But now traitors we are in all haste, and must be dealt with accordingly. For on January 30 (1642), in all the extremity of frost, at eight o'clock in the dark evening, are we voted to the Tower; only two of our number had the favour of the black rod by reason of their age, which though desired by a noble lord on my behalf, would not be yielded: wherein I acknowledge and bless the gracious providence of God; for had I been gratified, I had been undone both in body and purse, the rooms being strait, and the expense beyond the reach of my estate. The news of our crime and imprisonment soon flew over the city, and was entertained by our well-wishers with ringing of bells and bonfires; who now gave us up (not without great triumph) for lost men, railing on our perfidiousness, and adjudging us to what foul deaths they pleased."

At this time of surprise and peril, with the exultations of his enemies ringing in his ears, and an impeachment for his life hanging over him, Bishop Hall addressed a letter to a private friend, so full of the noble sentiments and indignant utterance which conscious rectitude inspires, in harmony with Christian humility, that we regret being compelled to give only extracts:—

"My intentions and this place are such strangers,

that I cannot enough marvel how they met. But, howsoever, I do in all humility kiss the rod wherewith I smart, as well knowing whose hand it is that wields it. To that infinite justice who can be innocent! but to my king and country never heart was, or can be, more clear; and I shall beshrew my hand if it shall have (against my thoughts) justly offended either; and if either say so, I reply not; as having learned not to contest with those that can command legions.

“You tell me in what fair terms I stood not long since with the world; how large room I had in the hearts of the best men: but can you tell me how I lost it? Truly I have in the presence of God narrowly searched my own bosom; I have impartially ransacked this fag-end of my life, and curiously examined every step of my ways; and I cannot, by the most exact scrutiny of my saddest thoughts, find what it is that I have done to forfeit that good estimation wherewith you say I was once blessed.

“Can my enemies say that I bore up the reins of government too hard, and exercised my jurisdiction in a rigorous and tyrannical way, insolently lording it over my charge? Malice itself, perhaps, would, but dare not speak it; or if it should, the attestation of so numerous and grave a clergy would choke such impudence. Let them witness whether they were not still entertained with an equal return of reverence, as if they had been all bishops with me,

or I only a presbyter with them. Let them say whether aught here looked despotical, or sounded rather of imperious command than of brotherly complying; whether I have not rather from some beholders undergone the censure of a too humble remissness, as stooping too low beneath the eminence of episcopal dignity; whether I have not suffered as much in some opinions, for the winning mildness of my administration, as some others for a rough severity.

“Can they say that I barred the free course of religious exercises, by the suppression of painful and peaceable preachers? If shame will suffer any man to object it, let me challenge him to instance but in one hand. Nay, the contrary is so famously known in the western parts, that every mouth will herein justify me. What free admission and encouragement have I always given to all the sons of peace, that came with God’s message in their mouths! What mis-suggestions have I waived! How have I often and publicly professed, that as well might we complain of too many stars in the sky, as too many orthodox preachers in the church!

“Can they challenge me as a close and back-stair friend to Popery or Arminianism, who have in so many pulpits, and so many presses, cried down both? Surely the very paper that I have spent in the refutation of both these, is enough to stop more mouths than can be guilty of this calumny.

“Lastly, since no man can offer to upbraid me

with too much pomp, which is wont to be the common eye-sore of our envied profession, can any man pretend to a ground of taxing me of too much worldliness! Surely, of all the vices forbidden in the decalogue, there is no one which my heart, upon due examination, can less fasten upon me than this. He that made it, knows that he hath put into it a true disregard (save only for a necessary use) of the world, and all that it can boast of, whether for profit, pleasure, or glory. No, no; I know the world too well to doat upon it. It were too great a shame for a philosopher, a Christian, a divine, a bishop, to have his thoughts grovelling here upon earth; for mine, they scorn the employment, and look upon all these sublunary distractions with no other eyes than contempt.

"To shut up all, and to surcease your trouble, I write not this as one that would pump for favour and reputation from the disaffected multitude (for I charge you that what passes privately betwixt us may not fall under common eyes), but only with this desire and intention, to give you true grounds, when you shall hear my name mentioned with a causeless offence, to yield me a just and charitable vindication. Go you on still to do the office of a true friend, yea, the duty of a just man; in speaking in the cause of the dumb, in righting the innocent, in rectifying the misguided; and lastly, the service of a faithful and Christian patriot, in helping the times with the best of your prayers, which is the

daily task of your much devoted and thankful friend,—Jos. NORVIC.”

After a bill had passed both Houses, and obtained the royal assent, for depriving the bishops of their seats in Parliament, the Commons proceeded to impeach the twelve who had signed the protestation at the bar of the Lords, on a charge of high treason. But finding that there was no likelihood of obtaining a conviction of a crime so serious, they assumed a lower ground. A bill was introduced and passed by both Houses, declaring the bishops delinquents of a high nature, depriving them of their ecclesiastical authority, and assigning to each a stated yearly maintenance. The bishops were then released, on giving bond to a great amount.

It was in the month of June that Bishop Hall found himself once more at large, after a confinement of five months. During this time he had not been idle. For besides taking his rotation with his brethren in preaching on the Lord's day, and corresponding with his friends, he wrote his work entitled, “The Free Prisoner.” On his release he instantly repaired to Norwich, the seat of his new bishopric, and was received with more respect than he anticipated from the temper of the times. He preached on the Sabbath following his arrival to a crowded audience, and continued his services unmolested till the month of March following (1643). The ordinance of sequestration was then issued, and the commissioners of Parliament came to inform

the Bishop that he must abandon his palace, and that they were required to seize on all his estate, real and personal. They went to the extent of their warrant, "not leaving so much as a dozen of trenchers, or his children's pictures, out of their curious inventory." But before the time fixed for the public sale of his goods arrived, a pious lady, unknown to the Bishop, redeemed his furniture, until he should be able to re-purchase it; and a benevolent divine of his diocese rendered an additional service, by paying the estimated value of his library. Being now deprived of every source of income, he applied to the committee on sequestrations for the annuity granted by Parliament; but he was told that an order had come down inhibiting any such allowance. In answer, however, to a petition from his wife, a smaller yearly payment was assigned to her; though, by a most unrighteous exaction, out of this scanty fund the Bishop had to defray assessments and monthly payments for lands which were no longer his. At last, after his endurance had been sorely tried, by witnessing the defacing of his cathedral, and the demolition of its splendid organ, he was ejected from the palace, which his straitened means rendered no longer a suitable habitation. A generous neighbour relinquished his house for the accommodation of the Bishop and his family, where he only remained till he procured the lease of a small property at Higham, in the neighbourhood of Norwich.

Of his subsequent life, spent in retirement and without molestation, we know little; but that little is enough to prove that its latter end was worthy of its beginning. He continued to preach until his infirmities and legal prohibitions had disabled him. Then "as oft and long as he was able, this learned Gamaliel was not only content, but very diligent to sit at the feet of the youngest of his disciples, as diligent a hearer as he had been a preacher." After the death of Charles I. he continued to observe with his family a weekly fast because of it. Though his fortune was so greatly reduced, a number of poor widows were his weekly pensioners. In 1652 he lost his wife, and then he wrote a tract, almost his last, entitled, "Songs in the Night." From this interesting memorial we see how this gray-headed saint went down to his grave "sorrowing yet rejoicing." "Have I lost my goods and foregone a fair estate? Had all the earth been mine, what is it to heaven? Had I been the lord of all the world, what were this to a kingdom of glory?"

"Have I parted with a dear consort; the sweet companion of my youth; the tender nurse of my age; the partner of my sorrows for these forty-eight years? She is but slept a little before me to that happy rest, which I am panting towards, and wherein I shall speedily overtake her. In the meantime and ever, my soul is espoused to that glorious and immortal Husband from whom it shall never be parted.

“Am I bereaved of some of my dear children, the sweet pledges of our matrimonial love; whose parts and hopes promised me comfort in my declined age? Why am I not rather thankful it hath pleased my God, out of my loins, to furnish heaven with some happy guests? Why do I not, instead of mourning for their loss, sing praises to God for preferring them to that eternal blessedness?

“Am I afflicted with bodily pains and sickness, which banishes all sleep from my eyes, and exercises me with a lingering torture? Ere long this momentary distemper shall end in an everlasting rest.”

And so it was; for though his painful malady was prolonged for four years more, they will appear but a “moment” now. The grace which enabled him to overcome at last, strengthened him to bear throughout. One who saw, has recorded, that “though sorely afflicted with bodily diseases, he bore them all with as much patience as hath been seen in any flesh, except that of the Saviour.” And when his time drew near, many of the noble, and learned, and pious, gathered to his chamber to implore his dying prayers, and bear away his dying benediction. After much time spent in devotion, and many words of gracious exhortation, he summoned the expiring energies of nature to make the last confession of his faith; and when so engaged, his strength departed, the agonies of death came over him, and then he fell asleep. He died on the

8th of September 1656, when he had reached his eighty-second year.

His will assigned the *churchyard* as his burying-place; adding as his reason, "I do not hold God's house a meet repository for the dead bodies of the greatest saints." He bequeathed £30 to each widow in the village where he was born, and in that where he died.

Here our sketch should have ended. But on looking back, we feel conscious of an involuntary injury to the memory of this great man, in having presented, even with his own assistance, a view of his character so exclusively external. We are aware that publications, parochial and diocesan cares, the business of the nation, the defence of orthodoxy, journeys of observation or of diplomacy.—in short, that the whole *busy* work of existence formed but in part the life of Bishop Hall. His was eminently A LIFE OF CONTEMPLATION.

He fell upon a time when the Church of England contained many men whose genius and piety would have immortalized and sainted them in an earlier age. With a theology less accurate and a devotion less enlightened than signalized their Puritan successors, and with a piety less strenuous and sanguine than that which poured in animation through the stern and athletic orthodoxy of our covenanting fathers, a jealous sincerity, a serene quietism, and an unflinching self-denial, were the commanding characteristics of their religion, which made it awful

and interesting to others, and safe for themselves. It wanted in the activity of life and the diffusiveness of Christianity. It was introverted, not aggressive. It mused and soliloquized. It was monastic and dwelt alone. It was more amiable in its forbearance than meritorious for its services. In its narrow channel it flowed deep, but it seldom overflowed.

The idolatry of one party has injured them with another ; but the day is coming that will restore to each his own. In its first outburst, the noise of faction will overwhelm the voice of piety, still and small ; but it cannot last so long. And now that the rancour of raging polemics is settling down into forgetfulness, the memorial and the works of these excellent of the earth are reviving, and posterity, more just to them than they were to themselves, is admitting the claims of either party to attributes of worth which they could not discern in one another.

For ourselves, with leanings all away from prelacy, we would commemorate with as much alacrity as we have felt delight in contemplating the singular devotion and exalted genius which distinguished many a high churchman of the first Charles's reign—the exemplars of an age only moving regret by the contrasted littleness of our own. To specify all the instances would not be easy ; and it is hard to select a few. But there was *George Herbert*, the gentle, the elegant—majestically humble, gravely gay—as antithetic in his character as in his own

quaint poesy—passing no week without music, and no day without showing mercy—converting life into one Sabbath, and fulfilling his invocation to that sacred day, when it and he “flew hand in hand to heaven.” *Jeremy Taylor*, too, soaring in ether with a load of learning which would have kept another grovelling—now casting a look of hope to the ancient models, anon dashed by the contemplation of his own ideal—beside the waters of Lough Neagh, musing on the mysterious tower of its romantic island, and its more mysterious antiquity, till his “thoughts wandered through eternity,” or amid the ruins of its monastery listening for the reviving echoes of its wonted orisons, until his dreaming fancy beheld in the evening light of autumn its tapers rekindled, and in the falling shadows marshalled anew the sacerdotal procession—an imagination revelling in all the picturesque and sublime of religion, and a heart responding with harmonious impulse to its loftiest requirements. There was *Nicholas Ferrar*—the Church-of-England man—closing his eyes on propitious fortune and radiant beauty; and that nothing earthly might distract his gaze, and no rest short of heaven allure his sense, immured in a Protestant convent—meting to himself scanty slumbers on the hard pillow of an anchoret—with his goods feeding all the needy except himself, and indulging no luxury save the midnight music of the choristers whom he retained to “praise God nightly” in the oratory of Little

Gidding. And *Henry Hammond*, economizing his time by the abundance of his prayers, and increasing his wealth by the wise munificence of his charities—living for his friends, reducing kindness to a law, and welcoming the interruption which called for its exercise—producing, amidst bodily sufferings, works of such research and judgment, as seemed to demand sufficient of both to destroy the most vigorous health—"omne jam tolerat punctum, cum Mors, quasi suum adjiciens calculum, terris abstulit." Among these and many more,* almost as ascetic in his life, but above them all in the largeness of his views and the soundness of his creed, we recognize the gifted author of the "Contemplations."

"The art of heavenly meditation" was that which he had chiefly studied. Even among his contemporaries, there were few who combined such density of expression with such amplitude of thought—few who had studied the Fathers so diligently, and who could command them so readily—few who had drunk so deeply the classic inspiration—few who had entered into the meaning of Scripture with the same spirit of quick apprehension and thorough appreciation; and fewer still who had learned to dwell so much on high. The spirit that taught the

* See Walton's *Life of Herbert*—Heber's *Life of Taylor*—Peckard's *Life of Ferrar*—and Fell's *Life of Hammond*. For others of the same period, the reader is referred to Lloyd's *Memoirs*, Walton's *Lives*, and Dr. C. Wordsworth's interesting collection of "*Ecclesiastical Biography*."

prophets to speak taught him to understand. In his company we feel that we are not attended by a perfunctory and hireling guide, but by one whose profession is his passion—whose familiarity with sacred things is reverential—whose insight is the result of love and long acquaintance.

He was a man of peace, and delighted in the retirement without which it is seldom enjoyed. "The court is for honour, the city for gain, the country for quietness; a blessing that need not, in the judgment of the wisest, yield to the other two. Yea, how many have we known that having nothing but a coat of thatch to hide them from Heaven, yet have pitied the careful pomp of the mighty! How much more may they who have full hands and quiet hearts pity them both!" "What a heaven," as he elsewhere exclaims, "lives a scholar in, that at once in one close room can daily converse with all the glorious martyrs and fathers!—that can single out at pleasure either sententious Tertullian, or grave Cyprian, or learned Jerome, or flowing Chrysostom, or divine Ambrose, or devout Bernard, or who alone is all these—heavenly Augustin; and talk with them, and hear their wise and holy counsels, verdicts, resolutions: yea, to rise higher, with courtly Isaiah, with learned Paul, with all their fellow-prophets and apostles: yet more, like another Moses, with God himself!" In such retirement passed the chosen hours of our author, and refreshed by such converse he penned his Contemplations.

"More sweet than odours caught by him who sails
Near spicy shores of Araby the blest,
A thousand times more exquisitely sweet,
The freight of holy feeling which we meet,
In thoughtful moments, wafted by the gale
From fields where good men walk, or bowers wherein they
rest." *

Bishop Hall's Contemplations are richly freighted with this "holy feeling." The value of this work does not consist alone* nor chiefly in the acute expositions of Scripture incidentally introduced—in the descriptive vivacity which paints the Bible scenes to the eye of fancy, or enacts its history anew—in the apothegmatical *naivete*, which deals out so calmly yet so pointedly the eager observations of a penetrating eye, on the various wisdom and folly, virtues and vices, with which a long life had made him familiar. Nor is it only in the ardent enforcement of Christian duty, and eloquent statement of Christian privilege, that this book bespeaks the attention of the serious reader. It presents in one view the Bible, and a mind rich in feeling and accomplishments, lovingly exploring and reverently interpreting the Bible; nay, as it were, fraternizing and amalgamating with it. These Contemplations will not be read with advantage by one who peruses them as a common book, as hastily as unconcerned; nor will they be read aright without adverting continually to the peculiar mode of their

* Wordsworth.

execution, to their author and their end. In the former particular, they closely resemble the Confessions of his favourite Augustin, consisting of reflections and ejaculations, so mingled as to blend devotion with instruction.

The author, whom we have attempted to portray, recurs to our imagination as the gentle, self-denied, and benignant parish priest, whom his neighbours eyed reverently as he took his stated evening walk, cheerful at times, but oftener pensive, in the fields near Waltham parsonage—a man of that calm resolution and ardent faith, which could at any warning have followed the Saviour whom he loved to prison and to death, and whose aspirations often soared so high as to forget the Meshech where he sojourned.

The end he had in view will be answered if those who read them learn for themselves to live the same divine life, and acquire the same skill in heavenly meditation—an art little esteemed and less practised in an age which would not be too busy if it thought as much as it toils; and an art concerning which a great proficient* has left a testimony which might form the appropriate introduction to the Contemplations of this great divine to which we refer.

“Be acquainted with this heavenly work, and thou wilt in some degree be acquainted with God;

* Baxter.

thy joys will be spiritual, prevalent, and lasting, according to the nature of their blessed object; thou wilt have comfort in life and death: when thou hast neither wealth, nor health, nor the pleasure of this world, yet wilt thou have comfort: without the presence or help of any friend, without a minister, without a book, when all means are denied thee, or taken from thee, yet mayest thou have vigorous, real comfort. Thy graces will be mighty, active, and victorious; and daily joy, which is thus fetched from heaven, will be thy strength. Thou wilt be as one that stands on the top of an exceeding high mountain; he looks down on the world as if it were quite below him—fields and woods, cities and towns, seem to him but little spots. Thus despicably wilt thou look on all things here below. The greatest princes will seem but as grasshoppers; the busy, contentious, covetous world, but as a heap of ants. Men's threatenings will be no terror to thee, nor the honours of this world any strong enticement; temptations will be more harmless, as having lost their strength; and afflictions less grievous, as having lost their sting; and every mercy will be better known, and better relished."

THE END.



